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Thesis:-

ROBERT OWEN AND CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM.

by

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Chapter I.Backgrounds to the Movements under Review.

After years of historical disputation there seems to be no reasonable doubts but that the earliest form of land ownership in Great Britain was tribal. The land was common property and the conception of private ownership was alien to our early forefathers. In Saxon times there was firstly folc land or people's land - the land held by the village community as a community and secondly boc or book land - land granted to individuals by charter. Even when the land became boc-land the old folc-land system was not entirely suppressed and in grants and charters, tracts of land were withheld from private-ownership and reserved for the use of the Community.

With the coming of the Normans to England, grants of land were given to the knights as rewards and were held as a fief from the Sovereign. Thus in theory all possessions were the property of the reigning monarchs. The knights in turn let out the land to their retainers on condition that these fought for the Lord of the Manor in time of war. The retainers tilled the soil, being practically their own masters in agriculture and giving a certain amount of their products to their overlord. The village communities regulated their own affairs by collective customs, rights and responsibilities. The Church often took the place of the lay-overlord and abbeys and monast^eries were surrounded/

surrounded by agricultural communities.

Land formed the chief source of wealth, trade and commerce being despised. By the middle of the thirteenth century certain towns in England had emerged from manorial and ecclesiastical control and these offered a ready market for food-stuffs, which grew in value and could be exchanged for money. As joint-posse^ssors of certain communal lands the peasants could sell their produce in the towns and also could command money wages for their labours. About this time the village communities began to lose their status, the land was enclosed and the vill^elains were dispossessed. As a result peasant revolts occurred and demands were made for a return to old charters of liberty with the restoration of rights to common pasture and fishing. John Ball, a priest, pointed back to the origins of society and asked

"When Adam delved and Eve spun

Who was then the gentlemun."

He advocated the removal from the land of the great lords, judges, lawyers and everyone injurious to the community. The revolt was crushed and the lot of the agricultural labourer became worse and worse.

As a result of the Wars of the Roses the old feudal families ceased to exist, and their retainers being disbanded were unable to find employment. At this time a spirit of trading had sprung up and English wool, cloth and minerals made their/

their appearance in all the markets of the then known world. Those who had power and also influence with the rulers enclosed commons, raised rents and turned arable lands into sheep-runs with the result that dispossessed farmers flocked into the towns.

In Lowland Scotland before the Norman conquest of England, the folk-land system was prevalent but, when the Scottish Kings invited Norman adventurers to their kingdom, feudalism was introduced and its yoke sat very heavily upon the people. Both Church and nobles possessed serfs who were in reality slaves. Attached to each abbey or castle was a farm steading in which were kept the cattle, implements and the "nativⁱ" or native men who were reckoned as stock and could be bought and sold as their owner found necessity. In early charters disposing of lands to monast^eries or to individuals there were such phrases as "cum bondis et bondagⁱs" and "cum nativⁱs". A bondus or bondsman could not be sold apart from the estate ^{on} ~~to~~ which he had been born but a nativus was sold unconditionally. David I. gave three slaves for ever to the Church of the Holy Trinity at Dunfermline and all good men were enjoined to restore to the church "whatsoever cumberlack^s (fugitive slaves) may have escaped and be presently in the possession of other lords" (National M.S.S.)

The Nobles owning great numbers of serfs became literally kings in their own territories and this caused grave concern/

concern to the Crown, which adopted various means to break their power. Royal Burghs were created by David I. and inside the boundary of one of these the neighbouring lord had neither power nor jurisdiction. The Burgesses of these burghs dealt directly with the King and if a serf could escape from his owner and live for a year and a day inside a Royal Burgh without challenge he was free for all times.

On large Church estates it gradually became the policy to give a serf limited freedom and to demand from him, rent and special service. This was a beginning of more liberty but the wars for freedom also played their part. Johnston says "The majority of men who followed Wallace and Bruce were serfs - they had for the time being escaped from the domination of the nobles and thus developed on the battlefield a sense of freedom."^I After 1314 there was a general slackening of the bonds but also a disposition evinced by the serfs to demand rights and privileges.

In the Highlands the buying and selling of men seem never to have been the custom. Every member of the clan claimed blood-brotherhood with the chieftain and there were no barons of alien blood to contend with. In the south however the feudal system was forced upon an unwilling people and lasted much longer than in England, a relic being still found in the feu duty to be paid to owners of land.

In England in early Tudor times Thomas More, Chancellor to Henry VIII. published his "Utopia" which was a criticism of the/

the social system and a sketch of the ideal state. His strictures are against enclosures and the rapacity of the merchants. He says "The sheep once so meek and gentle have become wild and devouring - they consume the peasant and his land. Insatiable covetousness causes Abbots and gentlemen to depopulate the country and fill it with sheep and they do so by fraud and violence, legal and illegal"^{I.}

More's Utopia is a mythical rugged and rainless peninsula and here Utopia~~s~~ the king brings his subjects to a state of perfection in humanity, manners, virtue, learning and material prosperity by means of communism and education. All must labour at tilling the soil and also work at one of the necessary handicrafts, e.g. Clothmaking, building, smithing and carpentering. In Utopia nothing is private and every ~~care~~^{body} cares for the common affairs.

After More's death and Henry VIII's breach with the Pope, the Abbey lands were confiscated and either bought by nobles at a price, or else given to favourites. In Scotland much of the Abbey lands as a result of the Reformation passed into the hands of the "Lords of the Realm." In both England and Scotland the landed aristocracy secured more land and the common lands were gradually absorbed.

Men began to regard the state of affairs as being contrary to the common good and various schemes were put forward as improvements. The end of the seventeenth century produced a crop/

crop of social reformers whose schemes contain socialistic elements.

Peter Chamberlain in his "^{Man's} Poor ~~Man's~~ Advocate" (1649) proposed to nationalise (1) The estates of king, bishops, deans etc. (2) The commons, wastes, heaths, woods and forests (3) The unworked mines (4) Unearned increase in value of agriculture trades and manufactures.

Peter Cornelius Plockboy in a pamphlet (1658) advocated the formation of co-operative societies for trade and commerce on a voluntary basis. To his mind co-operative production was cheaper than individualistic enterprise.

John Bellairs whose pamphlet (1696) was later put into the hands of Robert Owen, advocated agricultural colonies of 300 persons who were to perform all the labours necessary in farming. Co-operative workshops for arts and crafts were to be established and in all things the standard of value was to be labour and not money.

Despite enclosures the English Agricultural Society was largely feudal in spirit down to the middle of the eighteenth century and the functions of landlord, capitalist and labourer were still largely undifferentiated. Certainly there was a division into classes but social relationships consisted, on the part of the lower orders, of a feeling of more or less contented dependence on the "Lord of the Manor." On the other hand the landowner reciprocated with a degree of personal interest in the welfare/

welfare of his dependents. There was also a large class of Yeomen - small free-holders tilling their own land. There were still millions of acres of waste lands on which the poor could graze their beasts and even build their cottages. During the period from 1710 to 1760 the process of enclosure was slow amounting to one third of a million acres but in the following sixty years no less than 5,700,000 acres were withdrawn from the common-field system^{I.} Prices and rents rose and the wealth of the landowners multiplied.

In Scotland the Jacobite rising caused catastrophic changes. Sir Walter Scott at the close of "Waverley" writes "There is no European nation which within the course of half a century has undergone so complete a change as the Kingdom of Scotland. The effects of the rising of 1745, the destruction of the patriarchal power of the Highland Chief, the abolition of the heritable jurisdiction of the Lowland nobility and barons is the cause." The alienation of lands went on apace. Many of the burghs possessed commons and land for the common good but these were sold at a low price to influential landowners. Thus in both England and Scotland not only were the poor deprived of their commons but the small freeholders were dispossessed and as a class became almost extinct.

For hundreds of years the country was famous for its wool which was sometimes woven at home and sometimes exported in its rough state to the Continent. In the cottage was usually a/

a spinning wheel and a hand loom on which the house-wife and her family were occupied during the long hours of a day in weaving homespun cloth. Occasionally there was a small factory in which the motive power was the water-wheel and the horse mill but such buildings were very few.

During this time the means of traction were limited - the great iron horse of Stephenson had not yet made its appearance - and over badly made roads the stage coach lumbered and the pack-horse slowly wended its way. The cottagers spun their cloth and it was taken on horse back to the larger centres to be sold. "Cottage rents were from one and a half to two guineas per annum. The father of a family would earn from eight shillings to half a guinea at his loom and his family six or eight shillings each per week."^{I.}

About 1756 Lord Shelbourne established a mill at Ballymote Co. Sligo for the manufacture of linen which now began to compete with wool in the making of finer articles of clothing. About this time also cotton began to be imported from the West Indies but was of an inferior quality. The raw material was supplied by the master and spun by his employees in their own homes.

About the middle of the eighteenth century men began to plan improvements in the method of spinning and weaving. Machinery began to take the place of human fingers, the work being/

being done faster and with a greater degree of fineness.

Hargreaves, Arkwright and Crompton are names associated with these changes. It was not till 1785 that Cartwright, a vicar in Kent invented a loom which could be worked by mechanical power. When James Watt made his steam engine it superceded the water-wheels and the horse-mill, and so quickened the manufacturing process immensely.

Throughout the eighteenth century the population of the Island greatly changed its location. With the dispossession of the small farmers they had drifted into the large cities, Manchester in particular receiving a ^{great}~~good~~ increase. Sir S. Walpole gives the following table of the population of that city:-^{I.}

1724	-	2400 families	12000 persons
1774			41032 "
1801			84020 "

Scenes comparable to the gold rush in Australia took place, old and young joining in the exodus from country to city.

With the advent of machinery these were absorbed in the manufacturing process. Also, cotton began to take the place of wool for articles of clothing for the working classes.

Radcliffe says "From 1770 to 1788 a complete change had been effected - the spinning of woollen yarns had disappeared altogether and that of linen had almost gone - ^{cotton,} ^{cotton} cotton had become the almost/

almost universal material for employment."^I.

Men with small amounts of capital purchased machines and began to employ spinners. The partitions of cottages were knocked down and embryo factories were established in which no attention was paid to hygiene, men women and children toiling long hours in a foetid atmosphere, returning often to insanitary hovels to rest their weary bodies. Machines ran the whole twenty-four hours of a day, the rooms being crowded with operatives during the whole period with the result that infectious diseases found a congenial soil in which to rear their heads. The family handed itself over in slavery to the factory owners, the mother spending long hours at the machines and the children working hours as long. Wee mites of six years of age were confined for as many as fifteen hours a day in the workrooms picking up waste materials or attending to machinery. It was no uncommon sight for a visitor to behold a much begrimed child emerge from the bowels of a machine, being often too tired to stand upright without support. Accidents were numerous and often resulted in bodily mutilation. In later years Marx in his "Capital" gives an account of working conditions in his own time, and the conditions of labour at the beginning of the century can well be imagined.

State of Religion.

During these kaleidoscopic changes the leaders of Church/

Church and State had remained inactive and were quite unable to appreciate the spirit of the times. The educated and the wealthy were bewildered at the ferment caused by the working classes and disguised their anxiety under a cloak of indifference. The established Church of England was in a state of spiritual Atrophy and had virtually become a respectable though little respected Department of State. Her adherents looked upon enthusiasm as dangerous and, when Wesley and Whitefield had tried to give the Church new life, they were met with suspicion, sneers, apathy and neglect. No self-respecting Churchman who valued his position would be associated with those whom he regarded as fanatics and enemies of moderation. G.E. Raven says that when Wesley was forced into separation in 1795 "the church expressed her gratitude with a sigh of relief and returned to her slumbers."^{I.} The poor were not thought of, because the Church took up the position that God had ordained the poor to be poor. The current teaching as exemplified by Paley was "to be contented and submit to the higher powers." As a result of this lethargic attitude, morals were loose and even at Court deeds and speech were immodest, remaining so until the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837.

The Wesleyans and the few of the Anglican Church who cared, aimed solely at individual conversions, the environment of the poor and the causes of poverty not concerning them at all. To promote a crusade for the abolition of the causes of immorality drunkenness/

drunkenness and theft was beyond thought. In Wesleyanism there was also a strain of pietism and in its teaching along with all religious teaching of the time there was a strain of other worldiness - the things of this world were to be treated with contempt. As one writer says "Earth became a vale of tears, its pursuits vanity and vexation of spirit, its pleasures, snares and traps, its circumstances, a divine gift to be accepted with as good a grace as possible."^I.

Thus reformers instead of obtaining ^{help}~~hope~~ from within the Christian Community found their only hope in alliance with secularists. These latter scoffed at the current interpretation of the Bible which was held to be verbally inspired. In current opinion Bible and Throne were the two supporting pillars of the State and an attack on one was interpreted as an attack on both. Social Reformers were thus held to be athiests and this charge was brought against Robert Owen for his attack on current religious teaching.

The Oxford Movement had a great value in arousing the Anglican Church but these reformers were looking for a golden age and assumed that it existed when there was an undivided church. Back to the fold of the Roman Catholic Church was their aim. Cardinal Newman late in life declared that he had never considered social questions in their relation to faith and had always looked upon the poor as objects for compassion and benevolence. This/

This attitude caused a reaction and brought forward men like Maurice and Kingsley who were among the originators of the Christian Socialist Movement.

Thus from all quarters of the Church, social reformers in England were met with misrepresentation and abuse - there was a lack of fairness and a total blindness to the real conditions which stirred the souls of reformers. Churchmen of education and genuine devotions looked upon them as vain babblers while they themselves "babbled of a New Jerusalem or a United Catholic Church."

Contemporary Thought in France.

In France the reaction against landlords and employers was earlier than in Britain and culminated in the French Revolution of 1789 with the first Republic. Though Rousseau writes of an ideal state, on the whole the Revolution was devoid of social experiments.

Comte. Henri de Saint Simon is classed as the real founder of French Socialism. His opinions were influenced by the Revolution, but it was not till 1817, that he began to propound his socialistic theories. Like his contemporary Owen in England he at first appealed to the constituted authority to inaugurate the new order of things. Making no great distinction between labour and capital he advocated the appointment of industrial chiefs to control society. Later he published a work entitled the "Nouveau Christianite" which work caused a breach/

breach with Auguste Comte the apostle of Positivism. St. Simon begins by positing a belief in God and reduces Christianity to its simplest and most essential form - All men were to act towards each other as brethren. His precept was "The whole of society ought to strive towards the amelioration of the moral and physical existence of the poorest class. Society ought to organise itself in a way best adapted for attaining this end."^{I.} After St. Simon's death in 1825 his followers brought the school into discredit by endeavouring to establish a fantastic sacerdotalism and by teaching lax notions as to marriage and the relation of the sexes.

A Movement later in time but earlier in origin was that of Francois M.C. Fourier who first issued his work "Théorie de Quatre Mouvements" in 1808. With St. Simon the central ~~authority~~^{body} as visualised in the State, was the principle of authority while Fourier advocated a local body corresponding to the commune and called the Phalange as the starting point. A small group of enthusiastic adherents gathered around him, and in 1832 an attempt was made at Versailles to establish a phalange. To bring about universal harmony Fourier taught the giving to the human ~~persons~~^{passions} their natural development - the theory of back to nature. A new social arrangement suitable to human nature must be established and to meet this the phalange was suggested. This was to consist of four hundred families or eighteen hundred persons living on a square league of land, self contained and self sufficing for the/

I. Quoted from ^{Kirkup}~~Kerkeup~~ History of Socialism p.26.

the most part and combining within itself the means of free development for the most varied likings and capacities. The dwelling was the phalanstère, a vast, beautiful and commodious structure with such arrangements within that there would be no selfish seclusion, isolation and suspicion.

The products of labour were to be distributed in the following manner. Out of the common gain a very comfortable minimum was assured to every member. Of the remainder, five-twelfths went to labour, four-twelfths to capital and three-twelfths to talent.^{I.}

The attempt proved a total failure but the whole idea corresponded closely to that advocated in Britain at about the same time.

France continued to be the garden in which the tender plants of socialism sprang until the Revolution of 1848. Louis Blanc and Pierre Joseph Proudhon were the two men who brought Socialism down to the practical affairs of life. The former held that social reform must go hand in hand with political reform and he wished to see the state founded on a thoroughly democratic basis. Thus the State should create industrial associations called social workshops which were gradually to supersede individual workshops. The State would establish these, but afterwards they were to be self-supporting, self-acting and self-governing. In the Revolution of 1848 the Provisional Government voted a small sum towards the project but/

but Blanc had not enough personality to be controller of men on a large scale, and so the scheme collapsed.

Proudhon had no ready-made scheme but desired an organisation which would take account of the division of labour and which would maintain the personality both of the man and the citizen.^{I.} He defined property as theft because it had the power of exploiting the labour of other men, and of claiming the result of labour without giving an equivalent.

During this period Paris had as learners in social innovations, Lassalle the founder of the Social Democracy of Germany, Karl Marx the later advocate of the Internationale, Bakuni, the apostle of Anarchism and J.M. Ludlow one of the original Christian Socialists in England.

These French Movements are mentioned so that it may be seen that the movements in England originated by Robert Owen and the Christian Socialists were not mere mushroom growths in one land but that the same problems had to be faced across the Channel. J.M. Ludlow at least received many of his ideas from the Protagonists of socialism in France.

Chapter II.Robert Owen and New Lanark.

An attempt to alleviate the distressing social conditions arising out of the Industrial Revolution was made by Robert Owen at New Lanark in Scotland.

Owen was born of humble parentage at Newton, Montgomeryshire, North Wales, on the 14th. May, 1771. At the age of ten years he set out on his pilgrimage of adventure. He says "I deemed myself at ten years of age amply provided to seek my fortune with forty shillings, the expenses of my coach hire being paid for me."^I.

For eight years he served as assistant to various masters in retail drapery establishments, and received a practical training in determining the quality of cloth. At eighteen years of age he is found in Manchester entering into partnership with one Jones, a maker of wire bonnet frames, to manufacture mules for spinning cotton. This partnership was dissolved several months later and Owen as his share, took three mule machines with which to pack the yarn, when finished in skeins, into bundles for sale. With this scanty stock-in-trade he set up as a cotton spinner and was soon making an average profit of about six pounds per week. At this time a vacancy occurred in the factory of Mr. Drinkwater a rich Manchester manufacturer whose manager had resigned. Seeing an advertisement in Saturday's issue of the local/

local paper, Owen applied for the situation. He narrates his experience as an applicant for the vacancy and the narrative gives a glimpse of the secret of his early success. He says "I put on my hat and proceeded straight to Mr. Drinkwater's counting house and boy and inexperienced as I was, I asked him for the situation for which he had advertised. He said immediately 'You are too young' I said 'That was an objection made to me four or five years ago but I did not expect it would be made to me now.' 'How old are you?' 'Twenty in May this year' was my reply 'How often do you get drunk in a week?' (This was a common habit with almost all persons in Manchester and Lancashire at the time) 'I was never' I said 'drunk in my life' blushing scarlet at this unexpected question. My answer and the manner of it made I suppose a favourable impression for the next question was 'What salary do you ask?' 'Three hundred a year' was my reply. 'What?' Mr. Drinkwater said with some surprise repeating the words 'Three hundred a year!' I have had this morning I know not how many seeking the situation and I do not think that all their askings together would amount to what you require.' 'I cannot be governed by what others ask' said I 'and I cannot take less because I am now making that sum by my own business.' 'Can you prove it to me?' 'Yes, I will show you the business and the books' 'Then I will go with you and see them' said Mr. Drinkwater. We went to my factory and I proved my statement to his satisfaction. 'Come to me' he said 'on such a day and you will have/

have my answer.' I called on him at the time appointed. He said 'I will give you three hundred a year as you ask and I will take all your machinery at its cost price and I will require you to take the management of the mill and the work-people, about 500, immediately.'^I. Such was Owen as a young man. He found himself at nineteen years of age in charge of a factory, much of the machinery of which he had scarcely seen. He describes himself as being of a thoughtful, retiring nature, extremely sensitive and one who could seldom speak to a stranger without blushing, especially to one of the other sex. "I was diffident of my own powers knowing what a very imperfect and deficient education I had received" he says.

Drinkwater's mill was considered to be "almost one of the wonders of the mechanical and manufacturing world" but the boy-manager brought to his task a determination to do his best. Arriving first in the morning and leaving last at night, he examined the drawings and calculations of the machinery very minutely but maintained a discreet silence for six weeks saying merely yes or no to the questions of what was to be done or otherwise. Then the sphinx awoke - changes came thick and fast and soon an agreement of partnership was entered into. In 1791 he began to experiment with North American cotton and he claims to be the first to give that Country its real opportunity. Soon he was spoken of as the first fine-cotton spinner in the world (his own words).

In 1792, as a result of Mr. Drinkwater's family affairs, pressure was brought to bear on him to terminate the partnership. Enraged at this, Owen put the agreement in the fire and gave notice at once. At this time two rich old-established houses, the Messrs. Borrodale and Atkinson of London and the Messrs. Bartons of Manchester formed the Chorlton Twist Company and offered Owen a partnership, and the managership. This new combine became well-known and was soon prosperous. Having many customers in Glasgow, it became necessary for Owen to visit that city. The future social reformer was scandalised at the procedure of washing clothes adopted by the Glasgow women. "The washerwomen tucked up their clothes for the operation of washing by tramping on the clothes to be washed." He says "As we drew near our surprise increased when we saw the women with their naked legs and their clothes held much higher than decency required or that appeared to us at all necessary but as we came up and passed very near to them they took no more notice than if we had not been near them and made no difference to their tramping and turning in their tubs."^I. Such was his introduction to the working people of Scotland among whom later he was destined to labour.

On one of these trips to Glasgow he did business with the managers of Mr. David Dale the proprietor of New Lanark Mills, a man of great wealth, and a leading merchant of his city with/

I. Autobiography p. 61.

with businesses in various parts of Scotland. His cotton mills at the Falls of Clyde, founded in conjunction with Arkwright in 1783 were the first mills of importance in his country. He had opened a branch of the Royal Bank in Glasgow, had helped to found the Chamber of Commerce and was a member of the Town Council. In early manhood he had seceded from the Church of Scotland and had founded the sect of Old Scotch Independents, acting as pastor of his own congregation at Greyfriars Wynd for 40 years and learning Hebrew and Greek to help in his preparation for preaching. A man, just according to his light, Dale had done much for his workers. On account of the difficulty in obtaining labour, he had made application to the Parish Councils of Edinburgh and Glasgow that children who were a burden on the Parish were to be apprenticed to the cotton mills at New Lanark. Accordingly the little waifs and strays of those cities were put to work in the factory and their treatment, harsh though it may seem in these days was considered more humane than was general. The Annual Register (1782) Part II. p. 33. says "The boys enjoy hours of relaxation in succession. Their separate compartments are likewise clean and well aired and ten schoolmasters are employed in their tuition." A report says that these children were fed, clothed and educated by Dale and that their healthy and pleasurable appearance had frequently attracted the attention of travellers. The ages of these children were from five to eight, and their hours of labour from six in the morning till seven/

seven in the evening with one and a half hours for meals.^{I.}

Dale apparently knew little of cotton spinning and left his mills to the care of managers. On one of his visits to Glasgow, Owen met Miss Dale and soon the Young people fell in love with each other. Walking together one day, the news leaked out that Mr. Dale was willing to sell the mills ^{and} to retire from business. The young Welshman had never met the Proprietor of the mills but he hit upon a plan. Going to the counting-house he enquired if the factory were for sale and, on being informed that it was, he hastily returned to Manchester and laid a proposal of purchase before his principals. These travelled to Glasgow and an interview resulted in the Chorlton Twist Company becoming the new owners of New Lanark Mills with Owen as the new manager. With the young couple the 'course of true love did not run smoothly' but eventually Dale's opposition was overcome and the marriage took place. "Thus" says Owen "I entered upon the government of New Lanark on the first of January 1800. I say government - for my intention was not to be a mere manager of cotton mills as such mills were at the time generally managed, but to introduce principles in the conduct of the people which I had successfully commenced with the workpeople in Mr. Drinkwater's factory and to change the conditions of the people whom I saw were surrounded by circumstances having an injurious influence upon the character of the entire population of New Lanark."^{2.}

I. Reports Vol.II. 1800 pp. 364 f.f. Society for Bettering of Conditions of the Poor.

2. Autobiography p. 78

2.^a. " " 79. see over

The New Management accordingly set about improvements in the lives of a people whom Owen says were intemperate and immoral^{2^a}. Theft was general and Dale's property had been plundered in all directions. The village was insanitary because the site was not well-chosen but was selected on account of its nearness to water power. Owen says that because he was English, from the first day of his arrival every means which ingenuity could devise was set to work to counteract the plan which he attempted to introduce.¹ "Theft and the receipt of stolen goods was their trade, and idleness and drunkenness their habit, falsehood and deception their garb, dissensions - civil and religious their daily practice and they were united only in a jealous systematic opposition to their employers."² This dark and gloomy picture was overdrawn because Dale had laid a better foundation than that described. He had set his face against drunkenness and immorality, he had provided good food, clothing and housing for the children and had set up a store at which articles of good quality could be purchased at a cheap rate.³ Things however were bad enough and step by step the new manager gained ground. He scrapped the obsolete types of machinery, introduced improved methods of working and set himself to fight the dishonesty and drunkenness which prevailed to a ruinous extent. Caretakers, appointed by the people themselves were allotted a section of the village to report any offences and the/

1. New View of Society p. 43.

2. " " " p. 44.

3. A Reputation of Mr. Owen's system by Rev. John Aiton.

the offenders were duly fined. These caretakers were responsible also for the cleanliness of the village streets, the habit of the population having been to throw refuse in front of each door. The tenants also used to burn the window frames and the inner doors.^{I.} Rules were drawn up and every house had to be cleaned once a week, and the public stairs and the roadway in front of the houses were to be swept by the tenants. In the carrying out of their duty the Caretakers were at first subject to great abuse being even called "Bug-Hunters" but in course of time the scheme became quite effective.

Owen improved Dale's store, purchasing food and clothing of good quality and retailing at a moderate profit which was devoted entirely to the maintenance of the schools.

In the Factory he instituted a system of control by placing silent monitors of varying colours - each hue to signify the classification of the worker. He paid better wages and salaries than the average, believing that by this means he obtained greater efficiency. Reducing the hours of labour of his employees from 13 hours to 12 hours a day he fell foul of his partners who, being business men, objected to reduced hours. Accordingly he obtained new partners but these too objected to his liberal scale of wages and his schemes for social reform. A new Partnership was formed having such shareholders as ~~Jenny~~^{Jeremy} Bentham and four members of the Society of Friends and for/

for a time Owen was allowed free scope for his schemes.

Addressing a meeting of manufacturers he gives his views on shorter hours and better conditions. "Experience has shown you the difference of the results between the mechanism which is neat, clean, well-arranged and always of a high state of repair and that which is allowed to be dirty, in disorder without the means of preventing unnecessary friction and which therefore becomes and works much out of repair."^I He advises his hearers to devote equal attention to vital machines "I have expended much time and capital upon improvements of living machinery and it will soon appear that the time and money so expended in the manufactory at New Lanark, even while such improvements are in progress only and but half their beneficial effects attained, are now producing a return exceeding 50%"^I.

He next set about doing something for the education of the young and it may justly be claimed that he was the first to introduce Infant Schools into Britain. Dale had indentured child apprentices but Owen employed the children of his own village. The kindergarten methods of Froebel were in their infancy at the beginning of the 19th. Century but at New Lanark the system of teaching approximated to those methods. The origin of Owen's methods is obscure but they bear a resemblance to Rousseau's ideas. In 1816, the same year as the beginning of Froebel's work at Greisheim, he was given full scope for his ideas/

I. Essay III. on Formation of Character p. 2.

I. " " " " " p.74.

ideas. Even in 1813 he had succeeded in erecting a school at the cost of £3,000. Looking around for a teacher he selected a poor simple-hearted weaver James Buchanan "Who had been previously trained by his wife to perfect submission to her will."² As assistant he chose a girl of seventeen years of age by name Mollie Young. Instruction was given to the teachers that no child was to be beaten or to be threatened. Children aged from two years were to be taken into the school but the elder children were to help the younger. They were told to make each other happy. No books were to be used but children were to be taught the uses and nature of common things around them. The infant school room was sixteen feet by twenty and was furnished with paintings, chiefly of animals, maps, and diagrams. Owen is rather carried away with ~~the~~^{his} experiment and says "After some short time the children were unlike all children of such situated parents and indeed unlike the children of any class of society."¹ Dancing, music and military discipline were taught and these were claimed to be among the best and most powerful surroundings for forming a good and happy character. "These give health, unaffected grace to the body, teach obedience and order in the most imperceptible and pleasant manner and create peace and happiness to the mind, preparing it in the best manner to make progress in all mental acquisitions."²

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| 2. | Autobiography | p. 192. |
| I. | " | p. 195. |
| 2. | " | p. 196. |

In his school Owen did all that was in his power to discourage the reading of the Bible and the teaching of the shorter Catechism.^{I.} This attracted the attention of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1822 who enjoined the Presbytery of Lanark to enquire into the matter. A Deputation visited New Lanark and elicited the following facts (28th. October 1822) viz:- That the Teachers were permitted to read the Bible in the school, morning and evening two days a week and were prohibited from teaching the Shorter Catechism except on the Sabbath. The Presbytery describes the education in the schools as being the occupation of the children of their whole time in dancing, singing and marching a la-militaire and a few insignificant lessons in Geography and Natural History for the purpose of public exhibitions. Referring to the state of living the Presbytery's minute is "The Presbytery have sufficient evidence for believing that the moral state of the population at New Lanark at present compared with what it was under the management and direction of the late excellent Mr. David Dale has not received any improvement." However, despite the Presbytery's statement, the school was different from the ordinary and the children benefited in many ways. Visitors from all parts of the world went away pleased with what they saw. Speaking of the schools one writer says "Children were trained to habits of order and cleanliness and taught to abstain from quarrels, to be kind to each/

I. The Lanark Manse Family by Thos. Reid, Appendix II. p. 46.

each other. They were amused with childish games and with stories suited to their capacity. No corporal punishment nor threat nor violent language was permitted."^{I.} While the schools may not have been so wonderful as their partisans claimed they were certainly not as bad as the Presbytery maintained that they were.

Owens began to have trouble with his Quaker co-directors and he had to modify his curriculum and include Bible reading. Eventually in 1828 the Partnership was dissolved, and the business sold, and henceforth Owen's connection with New Lanark was at an end.

During his sojourn at his mills, he made no attempt to introduce any forms of profit-sharing. His rule was always a benevolent autocracy. True he did use the profits of the village store for the purpose of equipping his schools but the workmen seem to have had no say in this distribution. From the beginning of 1814 when he entered into partnership with Bentham and the Quakers he had more money at his disposal for his improvement schemes. A certain dividend was fixed and all above was to go to social betterment. He reduced intemperance to a minimum so that his own son at twelve years of age could say that the sight of a drunken man was unknown to him.^{I.} He provided medical attendance for all, and instituted a Sick Fund which however the workpeople/

I. Threading my Way by Robert Dale Owen (1874) p. 90.
 I. Do. Do. p. 71.

workpeople themselves maintained, each person contributing a sixteenth part of his wages. In 1823 a complaint was made to his co-partners that he usurped the management of the Society agreeably to his own views and in opposition to the known views of the workpeople. A Savings Bank was set up and received deposits during 1818 amounting to over £3000. He established also an Institute of Learning where all could partake of recreation and knowledge. Also religious services were allowed and McNab states that on his visit there was a clergyman paid by the Company.¹ Mr. J. Smith M.P. in a letter states "I never saw any population so moral, religious, well-behaved and happy as that in the peaceful vale of Owen's Mills."² In a letter to the "Times" in 1834 Owen himself says "For twenty-nine years we did without the necessity for magistrates or lawyers, without a single legal punishment, without any known poor rate, without intemperance or religious animosities. We reduced the hours of labour, well educated all the children from infancy, greatly improved the conditions of the adult, diminished the daily hours of labour, ~~fixed~~^{paid} interest on capital and cleared upwards of £300000 of profit."³ The Leeds Guardians of the Poor in 1819 appointed a deputation of three to report on New Lanark. Part of this is as follows "Mr. Owen's establishment is essentially a manufacturing establishment, conducted in a manner superior to any other the deputation ever witnessed and dispensing more happiness/

1. McNab p. 45.

2. " 51 Quoted from.

3. Quoted from Holyoake's Hist. of Co-operation Vol.I. p. 35.

happiness than perhaps any other institution in the kingdom where so many poor are employed and is founded on an admirable system of moral regulation Public-houses and other resorts of the vicious are nowhere to be found and the absence of their contaminating influence is strikingly exemplified in the contrast of manners and conduct between the inhabitants of New Lanark and of most other manufacturing places. In the adult inhabitants of New Lanark we saw much to commend. In general they appeared clean, healthy and sober. Intoxication, the parent of so many vices and so much misery is indeed almost unknown here. The consequence is that they are well-clad and well-fed and their dwellings are inviting In this well-regulated colony where almost everything is made, no cursing or swearing is anywhere to be heard. There are no quarrelsome men or brawling women The Scotch character has in it, no doubt something that disposes to a more exemplary observance of the Sabbath than is generally to be met with in England; but this circumstance apart, it is quite manifest that the New Lanark system has a tendency to improve the religious character; and so groundless are the apprehensions expressed on the score of religion suffering injury by the prevalence of these establishments, that we accord with Mr. Owen in his assertion that the inhabitants of that place form a more religious community than any manufacturing establishment in the United Kingdom."^{I.}

So/

So great was the fame of New Lanark that during the years from 1815 to 1825 nearly 20,000 persons recorded their names in the Visitors' Book. Surely this alone pays tribute to the good work done there and for this alone Owen's name must be revered by posterity.

Chapter III.

Owen's Welfare Propaganda and His Socialistic Experiments.

(a). Factory Act.

Owen did not confine himself to New Lanark but during his sojourn there and for the remainder of his life his influence was felt by the public at large, London being often the centre of his propaganda.

As a result of the Industrial Revolution, conditions among the workpeople of the newly established factories became chaotic and infectious diseases became general. Children were forced to work long hours and no attention was given to proper education or religious instruction. Boys and girls became bread-winners at the age of six years and worked often as long as fifteen hours a day for a mere crust. The Manufacturer looked to this source to reduce the expenses of running his mills because the work was of a kind suited to slender fingers. Children were an asset to their parents, one writer remarking "The greater number of children a widow has she lives so much the more comfortably; and upon such account alone she is often a tempting object to a second husband."^{I.} In fact child-labour was regarded as essential to the working of a factory. The children who were in Workhouses or were wards of a Parish Council were apprenticed to outside employers and their lot was indeed/

I. Wm. Lockhart in Sinclairs Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol. XV.

indeed an unhappy one with no parent to take an interest in their welfare. David Dale, despite the fact that he was able to give employment to over two hundred ship-wrecked emigrants from Skye, still found it difficult to obtain labour and accordingly applied to the Parish Councils for children.

In 1802 Sir Robert Peel in consequence of the discovery of some abuses in his own factory, and wishing for a general reform, had introduced the Health and Morals of Apprentices Act. This applied only to apprentices - children apprenticed by the State - and its chief provisions were to prevent nightwork and to limit the hours of labour to twelve a day. Provision was also made for the teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic and for religious instruction. Little attention was paid to the working condition of children and this gave grave concern to many thoughtful people. Owen took an active part in a movement for reform. He says "I became vividly alive to the deteriorating condition of the young children and others who were made the slaves of the new mechanical power."^I. Accordingly in 1815 he called a meeting presided over by the Lord Provost of Glasgow, and there proposed a string of resolutions to give relief to children and others employed in cotton, wool, flax and silk mills but found no one to second the motion. On returning from this meeting he immediately sent to the Lord Provost a copy of the address and copies also to every member of both Houses of Parliament. A meeting of the members of both/

both Houses, favourable to reform, was called jointly by Owen and Viscount Lascelles, afterwards the Earl of Harewood. Sir Robert Peel Senior was detailed to pilot a bill through the House of Commons but being a manufacturer he was under the influence of his brother manufacturers. Great opposition was brought against the Bill, the following being some of the protests:-

- (a). Masters ought not to be interfered with by the legislature in the management of their businesses.
- (b). It was not injurious to employ young children fourteen or fifteen hours a day in overheated, close rooms filled often with the fine-flying fibre of the material used, particularly in cotton and flax spinning mills.
- (c). The Bill sought to establish a new principle by interfering between the parent and child.
- (d). Wages must be reduced side by side with the proposed reduction of hours and hence increased poverty and wretchedness would be the direct result of this policy.
- (e). All experience proved that in the lower orders, the deterioration of moral increased with the quantity of unemployed time of which they have the command.

The House of Commons set up a Factory Committee to enquire into these objections and Owen was examined but his evidence was strongly repudiated by rival cotton-spinners. He says "I was so disgusted at the delays created by these interested members and at the concessions made to them by Sir Robert Peel during the progress of the Bill through the House of Commons, that/

that after attending the Committee every day of its sitting during two long sessions, I took less interest in a measure so mutilated, and so unlike the Bill which had been prepared by me and I seldom attended the Committee or took any active part in its further progress."^{I.}

That Owen was responsible for the drafting of the original Bill is sufficiently proved by the numerous references to him in the debates in which his opponents were insistent upon giving him the credit of the measure. Between the time of the introduction of the Bill in 1815 and its passing in 1819 he had denounced the religions of the world and thus drew upon his head the abuse of Church and politicians. The writer of a pamphlet against the Bill says "Late years have been wonderfully prolific of ostentatious and useless schemes of philanthropy from Member Evans and his notion of happy landholders to Mr. Owen with the Millenium dawning over the ruins of Christianity in a cotton mill. The Bill is in truth a part of Mr. Owen's dreams; he was its father though Sir Robert Peel has graciously become its god-father and taken upon himself the discharge of the parental duties. Such a descent might justify us in expecting a few extravagancies in the child but the reality has far exceeded our expectations."^{I.}

The result must have been disappointing to Owen because his sincerity in introducing the reform is unquestioned and his feeling for the oppressed was intense. He said on one occasion "Shall/

I. Autobiography p. 167.

I. An Inquiry into the Principles and Tendencies of the Bill 1818 p. 31. (Quoted from Podmore)

"Shall we then make laws to imprison, transport or condemn to death those who purloin a few shillings of our property, injure any of our domestic animals or even a growing twig and shall we not make laws to restrain those who otherwise will not be restrained in their desire for gain from robbing in the pursuit of it, millions of our fellow creatures of their health, their time in acquiring knowledge, and future improvement, of their social comfort and of every rational enjoyment?"¹

It was not until 1833 that improved legislation was passed in which inspectors were appointed to supervise the factories but the Act of 1819 marks the first step in the long line of factory laws. Owen had no share in the later legislation but it may be claimed that he was the first to force the state to open its eyes to the new duties which the changing circumstances of the time were thrusting upon it. One of his biographers says "He was in fact the pioneer of factory legislation in this country."²

(b). New Harmony.

In July 1815 the Napoleonic War came to an end and a change took place in the commercial life of Britain. During the period of the war, the mercantile navy of Britain possessed a monopoly of the carrying trade of Europe and British manufacture had thrived on the distress of the "Continent." When peace was declared, the mainland countries set to work to revive their own manufactories and consequently there was a depression of trade in Britain. Also, the disbanding of the fighting forces threw thousands/

1. Observation on the Effect of the Manufacturing System by Robert Owen p. 14.

2. Robert Owen by Frank Podmore p. 209.

thousands of men into a state of unemployment. Wages fell rapidly and distress was everywhere, sometimes in a parish half of the inhabitants were on the poor rates.

The theory of Malthus had attracted great attention. In his "Essays on Population" he had shown that population would rise beyond the subsistence level and that it would be impossible to find food for all unless famine, sickness etc. or moral restraint checked the growth of the population.

In this time of distress Owen, who opposed Malthus strongly, came forward with a scheme of social reconstruction. In 1816 a committee under the Presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury was appointed to consider any practical scheme of relief. Owen was called upon to give evidence and consented to draw up a report and to submit it to the committee. The report was completed in the following year and presented to the Archbishop. In 1817 a House of Common's Committee was appointed and Owen offered to place the subject matter of his report to the previous body, before it. In the report he claimed that the ultimate cause of distress was the displacement of human labour by machinery. Either the use of machinery must be curtailed or millions would starve to death.

In 1696 John Bellairs had issued a pamphlet "Proposals for raising a College of Industry of all useful trades and husbandry" in which he advocated self-supporting communities. Owen had seen this old pamphlet, about this time, and seems to have incorporated much of its contents in his own Plan. A biographer says "He proposed to cut the world up into villages of/
of/

of 300 to 2000 souls with a preference for 800 to 1200; every person should have allotted an area of land varying from half an area to three times that quantity according as the particular society was more or less agricultural, the dwellings for 200 or 300 families should be placed together in a form of parallelogram with common kitchens, eating apartments, schools and places of worship in the centre."¹ His idea then was a commune which was to be entirely self-supporting. By referring to the Report to the County of Lanark we get an idea of Owen's Plan in general. The deficiency of employment is not due to want of wealth but due to defects in mode of distribution. A change in the standard of value is advocated "Gold and silver are artificial standards. The Natural standard of value is in principle, human labour or the combined manual and mental powers of men called into action The average of human labour may be ascertained and as it forms the essence of all wealth its value in every article of produce may be ascertained and its exchangeable value with all other values fixed accordingly - the whole to be permanent for a given period."² Owen's advice was "To adopt such measures as will permit the labouring unoccupied poor to be employed to raise their own subsistence and as large a surplus for the infant, the aged and the incapacitated poor as their labour can be made to yield, the labourer to receive an equitable remuneration for the surplus he may create." No attempt was made to advocate the/

I. Robert Owen and His Social Philosophy W.L. Sargent (1860) p.171 and Threading my Way R.D. Owen p. 225.

2. Report to the County of Lanark (Glasgow University Press 1821) pp. 6 ff.

the reintroduction of hand looms to replace mechanical appliances in cotton spinning but an attack was made on the plough in agriculture. The spade was recommended as a substitute because the plough was a mere surface implement, not preserving the moisture. A Mr. Falls of Gateshead near Newcastle had made an experiment and with the arrogance of the merely practical man had claimed that it would be a general success. Owen without any knowledge of agriculture or without verifying the claim had adopted it in his plan. This then is the plan embodied in his reports of 1817 and contained in his report to the County in 1820. A contemporary points out that the plan aims at establishing a nursery for men, a kind of pauper barrack where men, women and children would be reduced to mere automata, their feelings, passions and opinions measured out by rule and with only enough work to do to keep the community in food and clothing. Others impressed by the Malthusian Theory dwelt on the difficulties which must ensue with a population relieved from the pressure of subsistence but left free to multiply. Owen was quite unable to meet his critics in argument, maintaining that their criticism was due to ignorance and inexperience. In June 1819 a committee was formed to give the plan a fair trial but the paucity of funds prevented anything concrete being done.

In 1824 an opening presented itself to Owen to put his schemes into practice. A party of Germans, of a religious sect, called the Rappites had settled ten years previously on some 30,000 acres in Posey County, Indiana, U.S.A., on the banks of the/

Wabash, a tributary of the Ohio. The settlement named Harmony consisted of a large area of fertile river flats with low, wooded hills in the back ground. A village was built with a silk-factory, woollen-mills, sawmill, brickyard, distillery, oil-mill and dye-works. After ten years the Colonists decided to move their home and accordingly Harmony was placed on the market. In December 1824, Owen accompanied by his son William, went to America to view the property and in April 1825 he bought the village and land for 140,000 dollars (approximately £28,000).

While in the United States Owen addressed distinguished audiences at Washington and having outlined his proposed Community, he issued a manifesto inviting those in sympathy with his views to join him. About 800 responded - some who were not industrious and others who did not share the hope of a new state of society. He had no opportunity of selecting his settlers and a mixed assembly they were. Robert Dale Owen describes them as a "heterogeneous collection of radicals, enthusiastic devotees to principle, honest latitudinarians and lazy theorists with a sprinkling of unprincipled sharpers thrown in."^I Owen pointed out that it might be necessary at first to import a few men of science from the outside, who would not be satisfied with the plain fare and simple accommodation which would be the lot of the ordinary workers. So in January 1826 he brought out some men of science including William Maclure a geologist, Thomas Say a zoologist, Charles Lesueur a French naturalist, Gerard Troost a/
a/

a Dutch chemist and geologist, and several educationalists from Pestilozze's Academy at Yverdun. A preliminary stage of settlement was proposed and the intention was to wait for three years before putting the community principles fully into operation. However, Owen was delighted with the early progress and so cut short the period of probation. A constitution was drawn up and on February 5, 1826 a state of unrestricted communism was inaugurated. By the leader's indefatigable attention a degree of order and system had been introduced into every department. An editorial in the "Gazette" says "While we have been discussing abstract ideas we have neglected practical means. Our streets no longer exhibit groups of idle ~~fathers~~ ^{talkers} but each one is busily engaged in the occupation he has chosen for employment. I.

Meetings were held on three evenings a week for community education and concerts and weekly dances chased away the dull hours. A school was founded and soon 400 children were in attendance. Workshops were established for boys who intended to be joiners and shoemakers. The community, however, did not succeed and in 1827 means were taken to end the experiment. Owen says "Experience proved that the attempt was premature to unite a number of strangers not previously educated for the purpose who should carry on ^{extensive operations for their common interest} and live together as a common family. It is evident that families trained in the individual system have not acquired those moral qualities of forbearance and charity for each other which are necessary to promote full confidence and harmony/

harmony among all the members and without which the communities cannot exist."¹. The community soon lapsed into complete individualism, "Owen and Maclure the two landlords selling or leasing in small lots such of the property as they did not retain in their own hands."².

Robert Dale Owen says that it was a mistake to change the scene of the experiment from England to U.S.A. Speaking of his father he said "He admitted into his village all-comers without recommendatory introduction or examination whatever - waifs and strays, men and women of crude ill-considered extravagant notions - a motley assemblage."³.

William Owen and Robert Dale Owen say "Our opinion is that Robert Owen ascribed too little influence to the anti-social circumstances that had surrounded many of the quickly collected inhabitants of New Harmony before their arrival there The members are too various in their feelings and too dissimilar in their habits to govern themselves harmoniously as one community."⁴. His son says "My father distinguished the great principle but like so many others missed the working details of his scheme."⁵. John Humphrey Noyes writes "The splendid success of New Lanark was followed by the terrible defeat at New Harmony. The declaration of war against all religion was between them. Such is our interpretation of his life and something like this must/

1. Gazette Vol. III. p.p. 204. Quoted from Podmore.
2. A.J. Macdonald quoted by Noyes p. 41.
3. "Threading My Way" pp. 228 - 256.
4. " " " p. 257.
5. " " " p. 259.

must have been his own interpretation when he confessed in the light of his later experience that by overlooking spiritual conditions he had missed the most important of all the elements of human improvement."^I. So the great adventure turned out a failure and Owen returned home having lost 200,000 dollars (approx. £40,000).

(c). Orbiston.

Prior to going to America Owen was interested in a scheme at Motherwell, Scotland, but, disappointed at the slow progress made, he withdrew his support and in consequence the scheme collapsed. The project of founding a village of co-operation was not abandoned, Abram Combe, son of an Edinburgh brewer and author of a plan called the Cistern, being the main mover in the idea. In 1820 at the age of thirty-five he had visited New Lanark and had become a convert to Owen's views. So sanguine was he of the success of his mentor's teaching, that he told a friend that he expected that the Royal Circus in Edinburgh would be pulled down and buildings for a Community on Owen's principles erected in its stead. In 1821 Combe founded the Practical Society which included some five or six hundred families. A store was opened, evening meetings for mutual instruction were held, dancing and social intercourse were encouraged and a school on the New Lanark model instituted. The Society lasted for a year only and was disbanded.

In 1825, Combe, along with Mr. Hamilton of Dalziel and others/

others purchased the estate of Orbiston, containing two hundred and ninety-one acres, on the banks of the Calder, about nine miles east of Glasgow. A huge building was begun but only the left wing was completed - Common kitchens, dining-rooms were erected and all cooking and eating arrangements were to be as far as possible in common. Combe's religious views were unorthodox and he scandalised the surrounding neighbours by permitting whistling on the Sabbath. Orbiston itself speedily acquired the emphatic name of Babylon. Podmore describes the settlement thus "The experiment was begun under the most unfavourable circumstances. The building was by no means completed inside, the members in their ardour to enter on the new life, having undertaken to get rid of the Contractor's workmen and to finish the plastering, joinery and other necessary work themselves. The weather was extremely bad, the half-made roads were turned into quagmires, the women were discontented, noisy curs banished sleep at night

Little forethought seems to have been given to the cooking and domestic arrangements. Those who did the work knew not where to look for payment and many housewives expressed the opinion that individualist cookery was better and cheaper 2:.... There was ground ready for potato-planting. Twenty or thirty people dug energetically for an hour, then since there was no man to direct them, they left off and dug no more."^{I.}

A Foundry was started and an orchard planted. All went well for a time but eventually communistic principles had to be/

be abandoned. The occupants would work only long enough to obtain sufficient food for themselves and outside creditors began to clamour for payment. Combe died and pressure from mortgages^e caused the whole concern - land, buildings and crops to be sold. Thus ended the social paradise. There was the same trouble as at New Harmony - no selection of inmates and not enough idealism to rise above the gratification of self. Holyoake says "The Community was undertaken without Owen's authority and despite his warning of the inadequacy of the means for success. It failed as he predicted it would."^I.

(d). Queenswood.

Again in 1839 an attempt was made to found a community on Owenite principles. A property of 533 acres called Queenswood, at East Tytherly in Hampshire was procured and Owen was nominated as Governor but declined the office. However he later announced his willingness to live on the property and he was elected Governor with practically unlimited powers. He at once commenced to use the powers entrusted to him and gave orders for the erection of a building. One account says "The laths which formed the partitions were of the best quality and the nails used in the obscurest parts of the building were the best that could be had. Seven or eight hundred pounds were spent in making roads and promenades - handsome, spacious and enduring. The old Romans would have respected them. Even the kitchen and the basement rooms used by members for evening meetings were wainscoated/

wainscoted with mahogany many feet high."¹ Owen incurred debts which could not be met and on being criticised resigned his position. The farm was controlled by a Board of Directors appointed by the Universal Community Society of Rational Religionists and the Directors had great difficulty in obtaining the necessary funds. In 1845 ^{an} ~~an~~ assignee was appointed to wind up affairs and the residents gradually melted away. Owen seems to have acted without any practical business method. He built on a lavish scale and left little capital for the carrying on of agriculture and trading experiments. "A conviction gradually came upon the minds of nearly all that Mr. Owen was no financier and had no idea of money."²

Holyonke describes a visit which he paid to the settlement. "We found an entirely respectable looking building half-red, half blue with two glass chimneys. The flints which covered the land pointed out the place as one intended by nature not for a colony of Socialists but for a colony of gunsmiths who before percussion caps came in might have made their fortune there."³

Denounced by the clergy, particularly the Bishop of Exeter, and boycotted by men of means, Owen and his disciples were unable to obtain capital sufficient to perfect the scheme. The land was poor and required great capital to make it productive. Owen spent money with a lavish hand. Finally the squabbles among his followers and settlers prevented any hope of success. Thus again did the efforts of Owen fail and again did he fail to accomplish his social Paradise.

1. History of Co-Operation - Holyonke - Vol. I. p. 301.

2. New Moral World Vol. XIII. p. 340.

3. Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life p. 202.

(e). Co-operation, Labour Exchanges and Trades Unions.

The modern Co-operative Movement owes its beginning to the teachings of Robert Owen. On January 22, 1821 a number of printers and others held a meeting and decided to form the Co-operative and Economical Society. The ultimate object was to establish a village of unity and mutual Co-operation combining agriculture, manufactures and trades "upon the plan projected by Robert Owen of New Lanark." The Society desired that its members, should enjoy all the advantages of co-operation in household expenses and the care of their children. Members were to live together under a common roof, buying their own provisions, baking their own bread, brewing their own beer and making their own boots and clothes. The Society took over several houses but decided not to put into practice at the outset a purely communistic regime. A fixed charge for maintenance to include rent, food, washing and education was decided upon. The Society also addressed a circular to the adjoining property holders stating that its members were willing to execute orders in carving, gilding, repairing boots and shoes, etc. A dispensary was opened and arrangements made for a doctor to visit members. The Society issued its own newspaper the "Economist" which gives an account of the movement but this publication ceased in 1822 and the downfall of the Society is not therefore chronicled.

The Co-operate movement lay dormant till 1824 when there was founded the London Co-operative Society which aimed at removing the difficulties standing in the way of a general acceptance/

acceptance of Owen's views. Public Discussions were held and expositions of Owen's system given. On one occasion John Stuart Mill took part in a debate opposing the Owenite view and championing the views of Malthus which Owen always held to be wrong. The Society also wished to form a Community and went so far as to advertise for farms. Shares were issued and in 1826 £4,000 worth had been taken up.

In 1826 A Co-operative Society was found in Dublin and after seeming prosperity for a while it lapsed into obscurity.

Thus one ~~aspect~~^{aspect} of Owen's Teaching took practical shape despite the luke-warm support of Owen himself who never waxed enthusiastic over this materialistic aspect of his plan. Prior to this the dominant doctrine in economics had been "the blessings of capitalistic competition" and "against this Owen preached a gospel of social co-operation and of society organised as a Co-operative Commonwealth of producers."¹ Cole says "The workers gave their own interpretation to Owenism. Instead of the village of co-operation they began to organise little Co-operative Societies and Stores, partly for propaganda and partly for the buying and selling on a mutual basis of goods of everyday use. They began to co-operate in a small way, not because they were satisfied with the mere buying and selling of groceries, but because they wanted to make a practical start and because this buying and selling could be used as a means of accumulating a common fund which could later be applied to more ambitious experiments, perhaps even to the foundation of working-class communities based on Owen's plan."²

1. Robert Owen by G.D.H. Cole (1925) p. 21.

2. " " " " " p. 22.

One of Owen's own disciples says that Co-operative stores and Labour Exchanges were means of approaching Owen's one object in view, nothing more.¹ Another of his followers says that "Just as Thomas Paine was the founder of political ideas among the people of England so Robert Owen was also the founder of social ideas among them."² The same writer in another place says "Co-operation, Mr. Owen no more constructed than George Stephenson did the railway system. But, as Stephenson made railway locomotion possible, so Owen set men's minds on the track of co-operation and time and need, faith and thought have made it what it is."³ Owen had his eyes fixed on the mountain peak in the distance but his followers were content to climb the foot hills near at hand.

In April of 1827 the London Co-operative Association advanced the idea of founding a General Store or shop where goods could be retailed to members, the profit going to a common fund. The advantages of procuring provisions at wholesale prices and selling direct to the consumer thus eliminating the middleman's profit, soon became apparent.

In May 1828 there are recorded only four Co-operative Societies, while in August 1830 there were three hundred societies in all parts of the United Kingdom. Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine No. 161 January 1830 says that there were 266 Societies in Britain in that month. Thus some idea can be obtained of the rapid/

1. Life and Labour of Robert Owen by Lloyd Jones p. 281.
2. Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life Holyoake p. 115.
3. History of Co-operation Holyoake p. 42.

rapid growth of the movement. The first four Societies were formed "with the intention of ultimately purchasing land and living in a Community."¹ The clause later disappears and the aim is to protect members against poverty, to secure comforts for them and to achieve independence. "To these early co-operators the word co-operation was synonymous with brotherly love; the petty trading profits were an earnest of liberty for themselves and their children and the grocery store appeared as an ante-chamber of the millenium."²

In his report to the County of Lanark, Owen states that gold and silver are artificial standards of value. "The Natural standard of value is, on principle human labour or the combined manual and mental powers of men called into Action."³ Owing to the number of Co-operative Societies in London alone, it became necessary to establish Exchange Bazaars. Owen on his return from New Harmony had advocated the use of labour notes instead of money at one of these bazaars. The "Crisis" a penny unstamped paper on co-operative topics edited by Robert Owen and first issued on the fourteenth of April 1832, has an advertisement in its fourth number stating that manufactured goods, raw material or labour can be exchanged on an equitable time valuation. The actual time standard was arrived at as follows:- "The average day's labour was reckoned as ten hours at the rate of sixpence an/

1. Co-operative Magazine March 1828.
2. Podmore p. 391.
3. Report to County of Lanark p. 6.

an hour, these wages being taken as the mean between the wage of the best and the worst paid labour. All rates of labour together with the value of the raw material was expressed in terms of this unit. Thus to take an illustration. If a cabinet-maker whose labour in the open market was paid at the rate of a shilling an hour brought a chest of drawers to the Equitable Labour Exchange to be valued, its price in labour hours would be computed as follows: First the value of the raw material would be set down in vulgar pounds, shillings and pence; then the value of the labour would be added in the same base medium; the whole would then be divided by sixpence and the quotient would represent the number of hours to be entered on the labour note."^I.

In 1832 Bromley one of Owen's supporters offered to his chief, premises in Gray's Inn Road, London, on an indefinite lease. Here was opened the "Institution for Removing Ignorance and Poverty" and also the National Equitable Labour Exchange. Labour notes took the place of coin of the realm but the sight of the latter however was very welcome to the Exchange. Great difficulty arose in arranging and valuing the ever-growing piles of goods deposited and soon the Exchange refused deposits of less than forty hours' value. In December of 1832 Bromley made a claim for rent at the rate of £1400 which was considered by Owen to be too high and as a result, the Exchange was transferred to Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square. In 1834 the affairs of the Society were in a bad state - the balance sheets showing huge losses/



losses. Soon the Exchange closed its doors and the experiments thus ended in failure. William Lovett who acted as storekeeper for a few months says the causes of failure were "religious differences, the want of legal security and the dislike which the women had to confine their dealings to one shop. The question of religion was not productive of much dissension until Mr. Owen's return from America when his Sunday morning lectures excited the alarm of the religious portion of the members and caused great numbers to secede."^I.

Owen never flung himself wholeheartedly into the scheme and several years afterwards says that he represented to his clamorous friends and to Bromley the most clamorous, that there could be no hope of success without considerable capital and much preparation. The system of labour notes seems to have caused endless confusion because eventually value had to be calculated in coinage. One of the falacies of the Exchange was that all wealth proceeds from labour and knowledge. A wooden peg and a gold one both represent wealth and perhaps absorb the same amount of labour in their manufacture but who will say that the wealth which each represents is of the same value?

(f). Trade Unions.

In the decade 1825-35 the Trade Union movement, having been relieved from the worst of its legal restrictions, took on a new lease of life. The new Unionism received its inspiration from Robert Owen who had laid stress on the human side of economics and/

and had stated that the object of industry was to produce happier and more contented men and women, but these Utopian ideas were lost sight of by his followers. The constant defeat of the local unions produced the belief that successful action was only possible when the whole of the workers in an industry were brought into line. A great general union or federation in which all parts of the United Kingdom were represented was attempted in the cotton industry in 1830. In 1834 the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union was formed and comprised agricultural workers, bonnet-makers, tailors, hosiers and framework knitters, gas-workers, builders, engineers, textile workers, and cabinet-makers. Acting on Owenite principles the first step was to acquire the means of production and to achieve this a series of strikes on a hitherto-unheard of scale was instituted, weapons of terrorism being sometimes used. But the assault failed - the organisation was too weak, the Government came to the aid of capital, the law was invoked and the movement smashed. The union adopted the principles of Owen but the means of putting these into practice was totally alien to their mentors' teaching. Owen was never a direct actionist and alienated many of his ^{disciples} ~~designs~~ by his refusal to even countenance parliamentary action.

Chapter IV.Owen and Religion.

Owen claims that in his boyhood he was religiously inclined. At the age of eight some maiden ladies took a fancy to him and wished him to become a convert to Methodism. A very precocious child he must have been, for he claims to have read at that age religious works of all parties. He went as far as to write three sermons and to be named the little parson. He says "But certain it is that my reading religious works combined with my other reading compelled me to feel strongly at ten years of age that there must have been something fundamentally wrong in all religions as they had been taught up to that period."^I.

On leaving home he was employed by a Mr. McGuffoy who was a member of the Church of Scotland and whose wife belonged to the Anglican Church. This worthy couple allowed no religious differences to mar the harmony of their lives and agreed to attend the services of both churches, taking their young apprentice along with them. He says "I listened to the contending sermons for they were often and indeed most generally either in reference to their own sectarian notions or in opposition to some of the opposing sects."². He ~~says~~ ^{claims} to have been all this time endeavouring to find out true religion and to have been greatly puzzled at finding every sect claiming to be in possession of it. He heard, read and reflected and became dissatisfied with "Christian, Jew/

I. Autobiography p. 5.
2. " p. 21.

Jew, Mahomedan, Hindoo, Chinese and Pagan."². He says

"It was with the greatest reluctance and after long contest in my mind that I was compelled to abandon my first and deep-rooted impressions in favour of Christianity but being obliged to give up my faith in this sect I was at the same time compelled to reject all others for I had discovered that all had been based on the same absurd imagination that each formed his own qualities - determined his own thoughts, will and action and was responsible for them to God and to his fellow-men. My own reflections compelled me to come to very different conclusions. My reason taught me that I could not have made one of my own qualities - that they were forced upon me by nature - that my language, religion and habits were forced upon me by Society and that I was entirely the child of nature and Society - that nature gave the qualities and Society directed them My religious feelings were immediately replaced by the spirit of universal charity - not for a sect or a party or for a country or a colour but for the human race and with a real and ardent desire to do them good."².

Owen claims to have reached this position when about twelve years of age.

Seven years later on entering Drinkwater's factory he maintains that, having been relieved from religious prejudices and their obstructive influences to the attainment of common sense, he/

1. Autobiography p. 21.
2. " p. 22.

he was able to view human nature in his fellows through a medium different from others and with far more charity.

Thus Owen set up as his basis the thesis that "the made receives all its qualities from its maker and that the created receives all its qualities and powers from its Creator." This he claims was the guiding principle of all his efforts for reform. His experiment "was to ascertain whether by replacing evil conditions with good, man might not be relieved from evil and transformed into an intelligent, rational and good being."¹

Thus a man was not himself responsible for his actions - the world made him what he was and therefore he was not to be praised or blamed for any of his deeds. In Owen's system of teaching at New Lanark no punishment or prize was ever awarded. Even in the nursery in his own home, the children were never punished nor were they praised. On one occasion his son was overcome with delight at the word of praise from an outsider.

Again and again Owen states his condemnation of the religions of the world. "Religion" he says "materially injures the finest natural qualities and while it prevails it will be a permanent obstacle to the peace, progress in knowledge, charity and love, and happiness of the human race."²

The clergy particularly comes in for strong words "Tell me if you know one religion in which the priests do not say 'believe as I tell you to believe, disbelieve what I tell you to/

1. Autobiography p. 83.
2. " p.141.

to disbelieve, reverence me and pay me well and you will go to heaven when you die, but if you do not do these things you will be everlastingly punished."I. The Church of Owen's day was perhaps narrow in its outlook and the clergy were dogmatic in their statement of belief but to believe that they were self seekers and autocrats is impossible. It was Owen's misfortune to be attacked by a few of the worst of them and to judge all by the deeds of the few.

He held that an imperfect development of the human faculties when humanity was in its infant state, created the necessity for a priesthood. As development advanced and as knowledge grew, the errors of the priesthood became too obvious to be believed by advanced minds and thus new religions were invented. Again by the discoveries of science, knowledge increased until religion became no longer a necessity and its evils outweighed its virtues. Until the human mind be cleared from all religious fallacies and all dependence on religious forms and ceremonies it will be vain to expect to make the human race to think and act rationally. The world ^{could} ~~could~~ only make progress when all religion was banished because this was the great obstacle to all substantial and lasting improvement. "I knew the deep-seated prejudices of all people in favour of their respective religions and that millions were prepared to die rather than abandon them. But I knew also that till they could be made to abandon them for a consistent practical religion based/

based on different ideas of the great Creating Power of the Universe - men could not be made to attain to the rank of a reasonable rational and happy being."¹ As in the French Revolution, Owen enthroned Reason as his Goddess. He held that reason disproved that man makes his own qualities of body and mind. But does religion rightly conceived rest upon this basis alone? Does it not admit that man has certain inherent capacities and that environment does mould his character to a certain extent. It goes further and claims that man having in him a spark of the Divine can with the aid of the Divine rise above his earthly self to higher things. Owen held that the religions of the world are based on the false notions that man makes his own qualities of body and mind; that he can believe or disbelieve at his pleasure and that he can love and hate at the dictates of others or against his own natural feelings.

Despite his statements that he had studied the religions of the world Owen's knowledge of religion was very superficial when he accuses it of being founded on the above assumptions.

The Church of Owen's day was conservative and when it was seen that the new plan for society was against the interests of clergy and church, the former marshalled their forces for battle. On the 21st. August 1817 Owen accepted the challenge and publicly denounced his opponents. Lloyd Jones compares Owen's feelings on going to the meeting ~~as comparable~~ ^{those of} to Luther at/

1. Autobiography p. 219.

at the Diet of Worms.^{1.} It certainly required courage but he glorified in his martyrdom. "What the consequence of this daring deed shall be to myself I am as indifferent about as whether it shall rain or be fair to-morrow My friends, I tell you that hitherto you have been prevented from even knowing what happiness really is solely in consequence of the errors - gross errors - that have been combined with the fundamental notions of every religion that has hitherto been taught to men Therefore unless the world is now prepared to dismiss all its erroneous religious notions and to feel the justice and necessity of publicly acknowledging the most unlimited religious freedom it will be futile to erect villages of union and mutual co-operation for it will be ^{vain} ~~where~~ to look on this earth, for inhabitants to occupy them who can understand how to live in the bond of peace and unity or who can love their neighbour as themselves whether he be Jew or Gentile, Mahomedan or Pagan, Infidel or Christian. Any religion that creates one particle of feeling short of this is false and must prove a curse to the whole human race."^{2.}

Such is Owen's passing the Rubicon as he often called this event. Today the statement would not be regarded as very terrible.. Men do not claim to be able to set down a perfect statement of religious belief and are open to be guided by a growing revelation and are willing to dismiss erroneous religious notions/

1. Life and Labours of Robert Owen by Lloyd Jones p.176.
2. Autobiography p. 222.

notions. And surely Christianity calls upon its followers to love their neighbours as themselves. Owen's so-called rationalism could not even do this, as witnessed in the failure of his efforts at New Harmony. He launched his great attack without first being conversant with what he was attacking. Some of his friends did not take his deed very seriously. The Duke of Kent said "If I understand Mr. Owen's principles, they lead him not to interfere to the injury of any sect but he claims to himself that which he is desirous to obtain for his fellow creatures - religious liberty and freedom of conscience."I.

Having launched his attack, Owen again and again goes out of his way to make fresh ones but sometimes forgetting his enmity to religion makes some startling statements in favour of a Deity. In the editorial in No. 57 of the "New Moral World" he tries to define the nature of the Power which controls the Universe, "Of that Power," he says "we have no certain knowledge but we may conjecture it is probable:-

(1) That an eternal uncaused Existence has ever filled the Universe and is therefore Omnipresent.

(2) That this eternal, Uncaused, Omnipresent Existence possesses attributes 'to direct the atom and control the aggregate of Nature', in other words to govern the Universe as it is governed.

(3) That these attributes being eternal and infinite are/

I. Quoted from Life & Last Days of Robert Owen by
G. J. Holyoake p. 20.

are incomprehensible to man.

(4) & (5)

(6) That if this Power had desired to make the nature of its existence known to man it would have enabled him to comprehend it without mystery or doubt.

(7) That as this knowledge has not yet been given to or acquired by man it is not essential to his well-being and happiness.

(8)

(9) That the Power which made ~~man~~^{man} cannot ever in the slightest iota, be changed in its eternal course by the request or prayer of so small and insignificant a being as man is, when compared with the Universe and its operations.^{I.}

The whole duty of man is to attain the object of his existence which is to be happy himself, to make his fellow-beings happy and to endeavour to make the existence of all that is formed to feel pleasure and pain as delightful as his knowledge and power and their nature will admit.

The finite then is not to try to obtain knowledge of the Infinite because it is all so much waste of time. The attributes of the Infinite are incomprehensible, and further if man were to know these attributes they would be revealed without mystery. Prayer has no efficacy because man is too insignificant to influence the Power which made him. Much of this belief/

belief is an echo of the "Aufklärung." Owen never recognised that in man there was something indefinable which reached out to link itself with the Infinite. A restless striving to rise above mundane things and to overcome the material. In all religions there was this aspect of the mysterious, a link between the Creator and the creature which christianity claims is established through prayer. Augustine says "Our hearts are restless until they find rest in thee." True happiness is attained through a growing knowledge of the Infinite and man is not so insignificant in the sight of the Creator. The Psalmist recognises the truth of the closeness between God and man when he says "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than God (R.V.) and hast crowned him with glory and honour." I.

Owen was assailed on all sides by the appellations "infidel" and "athiest" but neither name was just. He could not correctly be called an athiest after his *credal* statement above. He was a Deist after the fashion of the eighteenth century and today would most likely be labelled an Agnostic and his views regarded by the Church with an amount of tolerance not granted an hundred years ago.

However out of Owenism there did spring a school of athiests, or rationalists as they were pleased to call themselves. Owen's followers had become known as Socialists and

in/

I. Psalm VIII. R.V.

in the eyes of the multitude a Socialist was an athiest. Halls of learning were opened up in populous centres and the tenets of Athiesm, Socialism and Chartism were expounded on Sundays.

Hence people were unable to distinguish between the three and Owen and his followers were condemned for the excesses of these. Moreover Owen's views on marriage were very unorthodox.

He condemned the existing system holding that "as men and women had not been formed with power to create their feelings or to love or hate at pleasure it is blasphemy against the laws of their nature for men and women to make any promise relative to their future feelings or affections." He also taught that the present system takes away all opportunity of improving the race because there is no scientific system of selecting mating couples. Also the training in family life is the worst training that a child can have because it encourages selfishness. He held that the union between the sexes should be formal and should not be entered into until after three months' public notice and further that no separation should take place even if the parties desired it, until a year of union and six months further notice.

The Socialists were accused of being athiests and adulterers and good people shunned them as plague-stricken. All the forces of respectability were arrayed against them. One of the persecuted says "It was frequently the lot of the social advocates to find themselves in the streets. Sometimes they met in an old barn or a back room lying far down a mysterious court where the audience could ill find their way and had often more trouble to get out than in. Persons were often/

often sent to break up the meeting by violence and attack the speakers outside, on leaving the place."^I.

Again the Sunday meetings were a source of annoyance to many, because they were modelled on a church service. Socialist hymns and readings were part of the service and the speakers often were athiests. Social missionaries were appointed to preach the doctrine of socialism in larger towns. The government was forced to interfere and Holyoake, Southwell and others were imprisoned for blasphemy, but against Owen himself no proceedings were taken.

Toward the end of his life Owen became a convert to Spiritualism and claimed to have messages from many distinguished departed. He did not adapt his belief in Spiritualism to his religious beliefs and to the end he remained an opponent, though not a bitter one, to organised religion.

At a quarter to seven on November 17, 1858, he passed away at the town of his birth and was buried in the churchyard of the Parish Church. It was his own wish that he be buried in consecrated ground and this act of his again shows up his inconsistency and at the same time it caused grief to his many rationalistic followers.

Chapter V.

A Review of Owen's Life and Teachings.

Owen, being a self-made man and having had to fight his way up the ladder of life from the lowest rung, knew exactly what were the conditions of the working people of his day. He knew that many had a 'hand to mouth' existence and accordingly he was never found on the side of those who advocated a reduction of wages. One writer recently named him "The Henry Ford of the Eighteenth Century", meaning that both Ford and Owen recognised that low wages are not always the foundation of cheap production. His attitude toward the working class was always one of kindly benevolence and the working man recognised in Owen one desirous of helping him. A memorial from a Trades Union says, "You came among us a rich man amongst the poor and did not call us rabble. This was a phenomenon new to us. There were no sneers on your lips, no covert scorn in the tone of your voice; you met us as a fortunate brother ^{1.} ought to meet his affectionate but suffering brethren". In the early nineteenth century, employers as a whole looked upon their employees as so many cogs in the industrial wheel and many had no idea that these cogs were human.

In supporting men less fortunate than himself Owen made/

1. Quoted from History of Co-operation Holyoake, Vol.1. p.51.

made many enemies but he does not seem to have harboured any ill feeling toward these. In the latter part of his life he was shunned by most who felt themselves respectable - some could not find strong enough insults to hurl at him but he never retaliated in kind. Gently and unhastily he went his way believing up to the last that he was the prophet of a new order. One disciple says " He kept himself free from the hurry and unrest of manner which the eagerness of gain and the solicitude of loss impart to the commercial class and which mark the difference between their manners and those of gentlemen" ^{1.} .

Though he made enemies he also attracted to himself a band of followers, the torch of whose enthusiasm had been lit at his own burning flame. Whatever his enemies might say they could not impeach his sincerity. He had no thought of making gain for himself in his advocating better conditions for others. When he saw men of his acquaintance adding thousands to thousands and acre to acre and giving themselves up to pride of family, of title of position, he himself plotted for the welfare of mechanics and labourers. He found no satisfaction in the splendour of courts as long as a hovel stood in sight.

Owen must have been possessed of great personal charm of manners. Miss Martineau in her Autobiography says " His certainty that we might make life a heaven and his hallucination that we are going to do so immediately under his guidance have caused/

1. Sixty years of an Agitator's Life Holyoake , p.118.

caused his wisdom to be overlooked in his absurdity - - - - I own I became weary of him while ashamed every time I witnessed his fine temper and manner, of having felt so " ^{1.} He attracted to himself Duke and Commoner - Bishop and atheist by his kindly disposition. Despite this genial simplicity Owen pressed his views till his auditors became bored at hearing them. He was serene in face of all opposition, in fact no opposition could shake his belief in himself because he could never see any other point of view but his own. He was never humble in his beliefs and was absolutely unteachable. Failure after failure could not show him any mistakes in his system and to the end of his life hope still lived for the success of his Social Paradise. Despite this tenacity of belief in his schemes there was a touch of other-worldliness in Owen, a mystical temperament derived perhaps from his Welsh antecedents. He rose above the mundane things of life and often did things which seemed to others quite irrational. He was a man whose 'eyes were in the ends of the earth' but he neglected the pitfalls lying at his feet. He was always the 'will of the wisp' and men tried hard to grasp his tenets but these were often too nebulous for matter of fact men to comprehend. Cole says of him "He gradually lost, I think, that firm grasp of the world of fact which made him the greatest social innovator of his day. He gained instead the power of prophecy which made him the father of socialism and of many movements, but in a real sense all prophets are/

1. Autobiography V ol.1. pp.231 .ff.

are mad. Owen went a little mad in 1817 and he went on getting madder to the end of his days".^{1.} It is hardly fair to impute madness to Owen. People do not perhaps understand the words of a prophet during his lifetime, his outlook and vision are not theirs, but later generations seeing many of the prophet's dreams accomplished, rise up to call him blessed.

Like all reformers Owen had to face great opposition and also had to make great sacrifices. But for his ideals, he might have died a rich man instead of a poor one. His life reads like a romance - a poor boy setting out to earn a livelihood with forty shillings in his pocket - then succeeding until he had a controlling interest in the New Lanark Mills and finally losing all because of his determination to bring in his system of communes. Surely this last places Owen above ordinary men for it requires elements of greatness to lose all and still have faith in the venture. A Job might do so but ordinary mortals often pause when a line of action means the loss of possessions.

Though many earnest men were attracted to Owen he never became the great leader of a popular cause. He preached Community but was never quite able to enter into a spirit of brotherhood with others. He was no true socialist. His followers spoke of him as Father, never as Brother - he was the Patriarch of his people. At New Lanark he instituted a benevolent autocracy and in later days, though he drew men to him/

1. Robert Owen. Cole. p. 149.

him by force of his personality, he never allowed them to be framers with him in his policy. Unless he were the originator of a scheme he never gave it his whole-hearted support.

Being of a mystical temperament it was difficult for Owen to keep his feet on the solid earth of worldly affairs. At times, he displayed remarkable business acumen, while on other occasions he acted as if he knew nothing of business matters at all. His organisation of the New Lanark Mills pronounced him to be a business man of great ability and if he had remained at his mills his name would have gone down to posterity encircled in the brilliance of a great achievement. It seemed at times that when he had the foundations he dug them without any vision of the future. His scheme of social communities failed and his unwilling support could not prevent the Labour Exchanges and Co-operative Institutions from drifting on to the rocks of destruction. In these he failed to display ordinary business ability. Instead of confining himself strictly to the direct management of these endeavours he wasted his strength tilting like Don Quixote at imaginary windmills. The inconsistencies of his actions were numerous. Dr. McNab, the surgeon to the Duke of Kent, who was sent to report on New Lanark says " The apparent inconsistencies which have been found in Mr. Owen's writings and actions have startled and offended the public in general and have induced well disposed minds to remain spectators rather than promoters" ^{1.} Owen

was/

1. The New View of Mr. Owen impartially examined p.5.

was a creature of impulse, and truly has one writer said" For my part I think it was not conscience so much as by unreasoning impulse by which Owen was moved".^{1.} One of his greatest inconsistencies was his violent antipathy to religion and at the same time seeking the aid of Bishops to further his schemes. Early in the career of reform he took no definite religious stand but, as time went on, churchmen of his day began to oppose certain of his views. From that time onward he became the uncompromising foe of all religions. His speech in London in 1817 in which he attacks the religions of the world was the beginning of the end of a remarkable influence which he had wielded. His superficial study of the world religions did not give him the right to condemn them in toto. He made the mistake of misunderstanding Christianity and of confounding it with the teachings of its representatives in the Church of his day. If only he had made an independent study of the life and works of Christ he might have perceived that true religion is often different to the actions of its exponents. It is saying a great deal but, if Owen is rightly called the Father of British Socialism, then that Socialism would have had an entirely different basis to-day if its Father had found in the Christ the inspiration for his doctrines. Noyes says " Owen fell into the mistake of confounding the principles/

1. Sargent ob.cit. p.133.

principles of the Bible with the character and pretensions of his ecclesiastical opposers and so came into the false position of open hostility to religion" ^{1.} In his strenuous opposition to organised religion he made the great mistake of his career. Not only did he rob himself of a unifying principle for his ambitious schemes but he turned those well-disposed to him from active disciples into suspicious unbelievers. In his earlier days his words caused politicians and clergy to pause and listen. He had access to the halls of counsel of the nation. Cabinet Ministers and Bishops vied with each other to have him on their committee of social reform. He numbered Royalty among his friends and was everywhere courted as Owen the Philanthropist. Compare his position then with the shunned old man of later days, his wealth gone and evaded by all except his enthusiastic followers. He became an Ishmael when he deliberately turned his back on religion and proclaimed himself as a leader of anti-religious bodies. It is the custom even to-day to make these days loom large and to shrug one's shoulders and to say "Oh! Owen the Atheist" . A writer just after Owen's death says, " We shall be guilty of great injustice if we allow the misdirected efforts of the latter half of a life to blot out the recollection of the benevolent achievement of the first half" ^{2.}

1. History of American Socialisms p.83.

2. Sargent p. 22. (Introduction)

It was impulsiveness that lay at the root of his public challenge to religion because in reality he was a theist and found it easy in his old age to become a convert to spiritualism. Though he denies all religions, the very fierceness of his opposition makes a student of his life feel that he protested overmuch. The confession of his error comes from his own pen for in 1854 he says " The proceedings for the regeneration of society have failed to produce their natural effects because I openly opposed the religions of the world as containing as much error and as being fruitless in practice" . He adds regretfully that " At the time I was deficient in the knowledge which I have since acquired of the overwhelming importance of the spiritual condition informing the human character" .^{1.}

In his earlier teachings Owen magnifies the bitterness of the sects and fails to perceive that contending religious factions are not examples of true religion. Smarting under the opposition to his schemes by the Established and Free Churches he blindly condemns all religions in Europe, Asia, Africa and America. " The being who shall devise the means to terminate these spiritual insanities will be the greatest friend to the human race that has yet lived".^{2.}

1. New Existence 1. 15.
2. Autobiography. p. 141.

" In everything I attempted for the advancement and permanent benefit of the human race and in the very best objects I was always checked and obstructed in my straightforward and honest progress by religion".^{1.} Yet in another place his inconsistency shows out when he says, "How easily now could this change be made by a truly holy alliance of the leading governments and the Church Authorities"^{2.} . If the churches had given strong support to the schemes of Owen his opposition to religion would have lost its sting. Thus he made the great mistake of his career and robbed himself of a unifying principle for his ambitious schemes.

Owen's philosophy was that environment made the individual. Man was a creature of circumstance entirely and was not the Captain of his Soul but clay in the hands of the Potter "Circumstance" . In the preface to his Autobiography he says " The made receives all its qualities from its Maker "^{3.} . It was claimed that the discovery of this theory successfully combated the orthodox belief " that the made and created make their own qualities and powers" . This teaching he says " deranges the rational faculties of all so taught and perverts their judgment to so great an extent as in most cases to make it worse than useless on all subjects of the highest importance to the individual and to our/

1. Autobiography.p142.
2. Autobiography. X111.
3. Autobiography.p.1X.

our race " . In emphasising the importance of environment he recognised facts of human nature of which the Church and the Authorities of his day were ignorant. But by over-emphasising the material side he in reality says, " Let us eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die " . One writer says, " None of the sterner virtues - justice, fortitude, chastity, reverence are found. Under the Social S ystem of Owen and his followers there would be no room for such virtues, no need for struggle and endurance, for heroism and fruitless self surrender but also no wide horizons, no insatiable hopes or celestial ardours " .

Change the environment and the people are changed is Owen's belief. Slums and poverty do degrade those who live amid them but are castles and riches the "summum bonum" ? Are those what a man can give in exchange for his soul ? Does it not often happen that more happiness and more virtue is found in a cottage than in a palace ?

Owen neglects the inherent capacity for good or the inherent tendency to weakness - physical or moral - which is in every individual. He claims that he can make men and women physically and materially happy. He wishes man to be in reality a well-fed and physically comfortable animal and neglects altogether any other side of character. A man may be a betrayer of the weak because of his surroundings but again are not many such from the very nature of what they themselves are ? The rich man without any cramping environment/

environment will prey upon the weak as much as the man living in degradation. The well-fed man is as liable to weakness as his more hungry brother.. Owen pays too little tribute to spiritual influences and overlooks altogether that these play their parts in character building.

Education played a part in the propaganda of the Socialists and classes were held at the various Halls of Science in science, mathematics, history, drawing, economics and music. "Owen thought that education for the development of the individual human creature as well as for the safety and progress of society, was the highest and most important duty men could be called upon to perform"¹. Here again one side of man's nature was overemphasised. The mental aspect should be cultivated but true education consists in the training of body, mind and soul. Owen's philosophy included the former two but neglected altogether the third.

Robert Dale Owen who claimed to be his father's son but not his disciple says that Robert Owen's great mistake lay in the fact that "he regarded self-love or man's longing for happiness as the most trustworthy foundation of morals" . This is true but again he was only the child of his age because both Bentham and John Stuart Mill placed happiness in the forefront of their ethical teaching, and the Utilitarian School of Philosophy held sway at the time.

2. Life and Labour of Robert Owen by Lloyd Jones, p. 90.

Again as shown in a previous chapter his communes were failures. It was the very absence of higher qualities that caused the failure. Owen grasped the principle of communism but his scheme failed when the acid test of practicability was applied to it. "He looked for the speedy advent of the millenium and failed to note that mankind wasn't prepared for such a state ". "My father" says Robert Dale Owen "carried away by zeal and hope to benefit his race, failed to note the cogent fact that our civilization had not reached that point of progress when present self-indulgence shall no longer rule the majority of mankind. " ^{1.}

New Harmony was a failure because of its motley band of settlers. Owen appealed to his followers to give "each for all" but his principle was interpreted as the prosperity of each before the happiness of all. The Christian idea of losing a life to gain a soul was absent. Noyes writes " The trustees of Nashoba Community in abandoning the original plan of common property of Frances Wright (a disciple of Owen) acknowledged their conviction that such a system could not succeed without the members composing it being superior beings. That which produces in the world only common-place jealousies and every-day squabbles is sufficient to destroy a Community " ^{2.}

So Owen's schemes failed through the absence of a deep-souled bend of union and even with this, human frailties always/

1. Threading My Way by R.D.Owen, p. 83.

2. Hist of American Socialisms - Noyes, p. 647.

always tend to overcome the virtues. Communes to succeed must be composed of a very rare type of individual in whom self has been absolutely overcome and who is willing to separate himself from the outside world. A religious community is the only one with any possibility of success. As the editor of the New York "Sun" says, "Communities based upon peculiar religious beliefs have generally succeeded and this proves that without this force the most brilliant social theories are of little avail"¹. Even in such a Community the religious state of the units must be strong enough to overcome the personal peculiarities of each.

In criticising Owen's attempts, one is inclined to forget that he did not rightly belong to his own time. His vision swept, not the territory round his feet, but the far distant horizon. His ideas were too far advanced for men of his own time to comprehend. The gap between the industrial conditions of his day and his Heaven on Earth was too vast to be bridged in a lifetime. His burning passion for the emancipation of the working classes was not understood by employers who regarded workmen as something of an inferior creation, or by employees who refused to give up a little "substance" for a great "shadow".

Owen gave a direct challenge to the extreme individualism of his day and his example did point many to the fact that service for the betterment of mankind was a noble act.

1. Chas. A. Dana of New York 'Sun' May.1. 1869.

An excellent summary of Owen's life is given by Podmore, who says "If we are to sum up Owen's life work in a sentence, we must claim for him, I think, that he was the arch-heretic-Athanasius almost against the world - to the economic orthodoxy of his day, the gospel of Ricardo and the men of Manchester. He found his contemporaries obsessed by a nightmare; and if he sought to replace it by a dream, the dream was generous and human....Robert Owen did not rise to the highest. He may seem to have received but a slender portion of the divine fire. Doubtless every age has the prophets whom it deserves. He rose at any rate above the level of the men whom he addressed. He saw things which were hidden from their eyes; which perhaps are not fully discovered to ours. And when a later generation shall pronounce impartial judgment upon the men and forces which worked for righteousness in the nineteenth century, a place will be found for Robert Owen amongst those whose dreams have helped to re-shape the world" ^{1.}

As the years progress the world will forget Owen's personal peculiarities and beliefs, and principles will stand out. The fog of suspicion which surrounds his name will be dispersed, and his efforts for suffering humanity will shine forth. In his blindness he denounced religion, but his actions speak louder than his words and to-day we see that much of his teaching is Christian precept. As Christ said, ^{2.} "Forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us" .

1. Robert Owen - Podmore pp.653-654.

2. Luke 1X. 50.

CHAPTER VI.THE CHRISTIAN SOCIALISTS.

Robert Owen and his Socialism gave the idea of association to the people of his day. Though his communities were a failure, and his co-operative societies dwindled away, a foundation was laid to the practice of group meetings and group propaganda. His Socialistic idea grew from a puling infant into a lusty child and though he himself lost touch with its growth, his influence remained and was the inspiration of many movements of the first half of the nineteenth century. Though many reformers accepted his principles, his methods did not appeal to them. He was against any violent action, and proposed to convert the nation by educating people as to the meaning of his ideas. After his experience with the Factory legislation in 1816, he avoided any appeal to Parliamentary action, and on this principle he split with many of his followers. While Owen was in America there was formed in the Spring of 1829, the First London Co-operative Trading Association, and a sister society, the British Association for Promoting Co-operative knowledge. The first, as has been shown in a previous chapter, was an endeavour to capture all national trade and industry. The second was a propagandist body and was instrumental in setting/

setting up a number of other societies in London which led to the conversion of very many working men to Owenism. The failure of the Labour Exchange of 1832 confirmed the leaders of the working men in their view that the regeneration of society could not be accomplished without the aid of political power and that democracy was the necessary preliminary to social justice. The writer of a scholarly study of the Chartist Movement says "The National Union of the Working Classes and Others grew out of the British Association for the Promoting of Co-operative knowledge on the latter's decease. The hopes of political radicals ran high in these days and the National Union took a great part in fomenting the general excitement. The members were bitterly opposed to the Reform Bill of 1832, which was in truth a very small instalment of democracy and their conduct and language increased in violence as the prospects of a middle-class victory in the reform campaign became brighter. With the passing of the Bill the combination of political disappointment with anti-capitalist notions caused vague ideas of class war to take clearer shape and become as unquestioned truths in the minds of working men." ¹.

An agitation for the reform of the franchise was begun, prominent leaders being William Lovett, Henry Hetherington, John Cleaves and James Watson, all followers of Owen. This agitation was one of the beginnings of the Chartist Movement which ended so/

1. The Chartist Movement by Mark Hovell (1925) p. 50.

so disastrously in 1848. The relation of Chartists and Socialists was of an intimate character, and leading Chartists were frequently prominent in their advocacy of Socialism. In some towns a large part of the funds for building Halls of Science used by the Socialists for their meetings, was subscribed by Chartists and reformers generally. The great difference lay in the fact that the leading Socialists aimed at nothing less than abolishing the need for political action altogether. In an address to the Chartists in 1842, Owen says "Why waste your time in useless theories instead of going straight forward to the immediate relief of your wants, physical, mental, moral and practical."

Many of the Secularists who sprang from Owenism were prominent in Chartism but the Christian Church of the day was also influenced by the Movement. One writer says "Many of the Chartist leaders were ministers of religion. Even among the doubters there were elements of spiritual emotion, sometimes extinguished by environment but at other times kindled into flame by favourable conditions."¹. As Owen had laid a basis for Chartism, the latter brought into being the Christian Chartists and later the Christian Socialists. These former were in some measure a protest against the exclusiveness and Toryism of the Episcopal Church and against the narrowness of some of the Dissenting bodies, notably the Wesleyan Methodists. There was a desire/

1. Chartism and the Churches by H.V.Faulkener, LXXIII, No.3.

desire to base democratic principles upon the strong rock of Christian doctrine and also to brighten the lives and the minds of the poor, the ignorant and the neglected. Following the example of Owenism, Christian Chartism was always accompanied by educational efforts.

A body of Anglican ministers among whom were F.D. Maurice and Charles Kingsley, had also been watching the Chartist Movement with interest, and these, greatly influenced by the writings of Southey and S.T. Coleridge, later assisted in launching the Christian Socialist Movement. The Chartists had been crushed after the failure of the 10th of April and the working classes were in the "Slough of Despond". A group of remarkable men, Maurice, Kingsley, Archdeacon Hare, Ludlow, Charles Mansfield, J.W. Parker and Thomas Hughes, met at the house of Mr. Maurice in Bloomsbury, and laid down the lines of that peaceful agitation for the organisation of labour on the principles of association rather than of competition, which came to be known as the Christian Socialist Movement. Maurice was the prophet, Kingsley the preacher and writer, and Ludlow and the others the executive, which sought inspiration from the prophet, and wisdom and guidance from the preacher.

J.M. Furnivall, one of the lesser lights in the firmament of the early movement, in his own hand-writing on a fly-leaf at the beginning of a volume of Tracts says " J.M. Ludlow was the true mainspring of our Christian Social Movement. Maurice and the/

the rest of us knew nothing of Socialism. Ludlow educated in Paris, knew all. He got us round Maurice and really led us." ¹. Most of the group had received their impressions of Socialism from the experiments of Owen, but Ludlow brought in many ideas obtained from his experience in France during the Republic of 1848. Colonel Maurice says "John Malcolm Ludlow was the founder of the movement and he brought in my father by the force of his strong will after the first meeting had been held." Ludlow was educated in France and was profoundly influenced by the democratic movements in that country. In the atmosphere of Paris he grew up to understand the meaning of democracy in a deeper way than his English contemporaries. He joined the Société des amis des pauvres, a Protestant guild for the relief of distress and through work in this guild he learned a feeling of freedom from class distinction which made it possible for him in later years to approach working men without any trace of patronage. He was firmly attached to Christianity and his deep religious feeling was apparent in his speeches, writings and conduct. One of his many literary efforts was Tract No.III, of Tracts on Christian Socialism and this shows how much the policy of the Christian Socialists was affected by the democratic movements in France.

Maurice and Kingsley were not indeed Socialists as now understood. Their Socialism consisted in the Brotherhood of man/

1. In British Museum.

man under the Fatherhood of God. They adopted the idea of Association but added to it a religious basis and thus a title Worker's Christian Association would have been more appropriate than Christian Socialism.

Kingsley calls Maurice 'Master' and so one must look to the Master for a statement of belief. In his "Kingdom of Christ", Maurice says, "There arose up before me the idea of a church universal, not built upon human inventions or human faith but on the very nature of God himself - upon the union which he has formed with His creatures." His ideal was a church as a witness to the fellowship which alone can make significant and intelligible the life of man, protecting always against that individual selfishness and egotism which is at all times tearing society assunder into its constituent and warring atoms. He holds that the Church alone can educate a nation and sees the redemption of humanity in a true Church." A Church" he says, "which was looked upon, and almost looked upon itself as a tool of the aristocracy, which compared its own orders with the ranks of civic society and forgot that it existed to testify that man as man is the object of his Creator's sympathy, such a Church had no voice which could reach the hearts of the multitude."

Again he holds that words spoken at revivals "are very mighty, but are not enough - men feel that they are not only merely lost creatures - they look up to heaven above them and ask whether it/

it can be true that this is the whole account of their condition - that their sense of right and wrong, their cravings for fellowship, their consciousness of being creatures having powers which no other creatures possess are all for nothing." "If religion" they say, "will give us no explanation of these feelings, if it can only tell us about a fall for the whole race and an escape for a few individuals in it, then our wants must be satisfied without religion."

The attitude of the Church as a whole towards any social reform was laissez-faire. "It is God's will to create a poor class and it is God's will that people should be poor." The teaching of Maurice was in direct opposition to this. The Gospel was for poor as well as rich and righteousness could not be founded in a hungry and discontented individual. "Our church must apply herself to the task of raising the poor into men. She cannot go on treating them merely as poor."

The day following the Chartist failure, the citizens of London were startled by a placard appealing to the defeated suffragists. It was worded, "Workmen of England", "You have more friends than you think for, Friends who expect nothing from you but who love you because you are their brothers, and who fear God and therefore dare not neglect you, His children; men who are drudging and sacrificing themselves to get you your rights; men who know what your rights are better than you know yourselves, who/

who are trying to get for you something nobler than charters and dozens of Acts of Parliament who dare refuse you freedom? for the Almighty God and Jesus Christ, the poor man who died for poor men will bring it about for you though all the Mammonites of the earth were against you." 1.

From this time onward the Christian Socialists did all in their power to alleviate the lot of the working man. Their first attack was against the prevailing economic theory of individualism and competition. Says Kingsley, "Sweet Competition! Heavenly maid! Nowadays hymned alike by penny-a-liners and philosophers as the ground of all society - the only real preserver of all the earth! Why not in heaven too! Perhaps there is competition among the angels, and Gabriel and Raphael have won their rank by doing the maximum of worship on the minimum of grace." 2. To aid the propaganda a periodical paper, after the style of the Tracts of the Oxford Movement, was issued entitled "Politics for the People." On its first page, Maurice defined plainly the principles upon which he and his friends proposed to "consider the questions of the relations of the capitalists to the labourer, of what a Government can or cannot do, to find work or pay for the poor." The most characteristic "note" of the "Politics" both literary and social was struck by the articles which bore the name/

1. Charles Kingsley, His letters and Memories of his Life. Vol. I. pp. 118-9.
2. " " " " " " " " " p. 149.

name of "Parson Lot" really an alias of Charles Kingsley.

In the summer of 1849, a series of meetings held at the house of Maurice, ended in a determination to take some practical step towards overcoming the evils in the tailoring and other trades. This meeting was addressed by Maurice who protested against the evils of unrestricted competition. Though no account of the speech is on record, the following written shortly afterwards gives an idea of the opinion of Maurice on the subject

"Competition is put forth as the law of the Universe. That is a lie. The time is come for us to declare that it is a lie. I see no way but associating for work instead of for strikes. I do not say or think we feel that the relation of the employer and the employed is not a true relation. I do not determine that wages may not be a righteous mode of expressing that relation. But at present it is clear that this relation is destroyed, that the payment of wages is nothing but a deception. We may restore the old state of things, we may bring in a new one. God will decide that. His voice has gone forth clearly bidding us come forth to fight against the present state of things to call men to repentance first of all, but then also as it seems to me to give them an opportunity of showing their repentance and bringing forth fruits worthy of it Given a moral state and it seems to me the ~~relations~~ ^{revelations} are rather in favour of the conclusion that the old position of master and worker might be a healthy one. But it is

no/

no old condition we are contending with but an accursed new one, the product of a ~~baseful~~^{hateful}, devilish theory which must be fought with to the death." ^{1.}

As a result of the meetings the Co-operative Association of Tailors was instituted. Kingsley in his "Alton Locke" gives a harrowing picture of that trade. The Master Tailors had formerly possessed their own workrooms in which the hands made up the material. These workrooms were not very healthy, and the wages had no more than kept the workmen from starvation. There now came into vogue the contract system, in which an individual agreed to make up the material for a certain price. He in turn let the contract to someone else at a lower price, himself taking the difference in the two estimates. Thus the workrooms were closed and the work was done in the homes of the employees who were given a certain price per garment. This price was so low that long hours had to be worked in order that the sewers could make enough to exist. Often a tailor would convert his miserable abode into a workroom and would engage other unfortunate tailors to assist, accepting their labour in return for the shelter of his roof. Kingsley makes Alton Locke to say. "I stopped on the landing of the second floor and asked which way, and seeing her in no hurry to answer, opened a door, inside which I heard the hum of many voices/

1. Life of Frederick Maurice, Vol. II, p. 32.

voices, saying in as sprightly a tone as I could muster, that I supposed this was the workroom. As I had expected, a foetid choking den, with just room enough in it for the seven or eight sallow starved beings who, coatless, shoeless, ragged, sat stitching each on his truckle bed As one clutched my arm with his long skinny trembling fingers, I saw that his hands and feet were all chapped and bleeding. Neither shoe nor stocking did he possess; his only garments were a ragged shirt and trousers, and in the horrible mockery of his own misery, a grand new flowered satin vest which to-morrow was to figure in some gorgeous shop window." ¹. Women also took their work home and earned scanty wages, being often forced to sell their bodies to keep the spark of life in them. "Up stair after stair we went, while wails of children and the curses of men streamed out upon the hot stifling rush of air from every doorway, till, at the topmost storey, we knocked at a garret door. We entered. Bare it was of furniture, comfortless, and freezing cold; but, with the exception of the plaster dropping from the roof, and the broken windows patched with rags and paper, there was a scrupulous neatness. There was no bed in the room - no table. On a broken chair by the chimney sat a miserable old woman fancying she was warming her hands over embers which had long been cold - while upon a few rags on the floor lay a girl, ugly, small - pox-marked, hollow-eyed, emaciated - her/

1. Alton Locke (Collins Press) pp. 237-8.

her only bed clothes the skirt of a large handsome new riding-habit, at which two other girls, wan and tawdry, were stitching busily as they sat right and left of her on the floor." Kingsley makes one of these girls to say. "Between us we only earn three shillings a week, and there was ever so much to take off for fire and twopence for thread and fivepence for candles and then we were always getting fined because they never gave us out the work till too late on purpose, and then they lowered prices again." ¹. These are only fancies of the author but the pictures are true of the time.

A Pamphlet "Cheap Clothes and Nasty" was issued and was in reality an indictment of the competitive system and a plea for co-operation or of some system in which the principle of association should take the place of competition.

Following the Association of Tailors was the Association of Needlewomen. Kingsley censures the "women who carelessly wear fine clothes without having enquired into the possible cost of a sister's shame or death, and who forget that some cheap things are too dear for human use." He reminds them that "too often in the skirts of their clothing is found the blood of the souls of God's people."

Socialism thus came to the Early Christian Socialists in the form of the encouragement of Associations or co-operation among/

1. Alton Locke, pp. 102, et. seq.

among the working class themselves. Maurice incorporated the ideas of Ludlow and used the name of Socialism which came from an Owenite source. The name Christian Socialism was chosen with a desire to offend the maximum number of persons on both sides. "To commit us at once" says Maurice "to the conflict which we must engage in sooner or later with the unsocial Christians and the Unchristian Socialists." "I seriously believe" he says "that Christianity is the only foundation of socialism and that a true socialism is the necessary result of a sound Christianity."

Maurice and Kingsley felt the necessity of some preliminary work in the training of men if the co-operative societies were to be a success, and accordingly they began the organisation of the Society for the Promotion of Working-men's Associations, and by the publication of Tracts on Christian Socialism.

These tracts were published by George Bell of 186 Fleet Street, and were sold at one penny each or six shillings per hundred. In the Tracts is the following "Owen failed because he sought to create a new state of things instead of proclaiming what this state of things is which God has made and which we are trying to set at nought." ¹.

Also there is the constitution of the Working Tailors' Association. It aims at "diffusing the principles of co-operation as a practical application of Christianity to the purposes of trade/

1. Tract No.II, p. 11. by T.Hughes.

trade and industry. "Our success" says the tract "depends on every associate being firmly impressed with the idea that his personal interest is subordinate to that of his Association and dependent on it and upon every Association acting upon the principle that its particular interest is subordinate to, that of the Union and dependent on it."

Entrance to the Association was gained as follows:-

- (1) Members must be of good reputation and competent workmen.
- (2) Members to pay a subscription of £1 to be realised no more than 1/- per week. 1.

The Association thus desired to include the best type of workmen and for a time succeeded in their object.

The great difference between Owenite Co-operative Stores and the true Christian Socialism was that the latter confined itself to co-operative production. This idea was derived from the study of Associations in Paris, the knowledge of which was almost exclusively derived from documents collected by Ludlow. As new Associations sprang up, it became necessary to constitute a central Board of Control and accordingly, in 1852, this was done. This Board represented the Associates or members of the Working Associations and was composed of managers of all Associations. Its duties were to regulate the relations of the Associations with each other, and to see that the provisions of the constitution were duly carried out by the Associations.

In/

In this Constitution the communistic principle of an equal wage was condemned. Tract IV says "Some French Associations have agreed to pay equal wages to all, but this is a grave error. Our object is the Organisation of Labour so that it shall receive its due reward, and to pay equal wages would be to take from the talented, the strong, the industrious, for the sake of giving to the simple, the weak and the idle. The affect would be, in our present state of society, that the Associations would be in danger of being filled with indifferent workmen and that most of the good workmen would remain with competitive employers." It was laid down that each Associate was to receive an allowance "which shall be a fair day's remuneration for a fair day's work, whether by time or piece, according to the custom of the trade, and that the allowance be in proportion to the skill and energy of the recipient." The net profit after deducting all expenses was to be divided every six months between all the associates in proportion to the time they have severally worked. Precaution was thus taken that the best workers received the best remuneration.

Unfortunately the members of the earlier Associations were chosen with scarcely any enquiry into their previous character or record, and soon chaos reigned. The Tailors Association had to be reconstituted and the new men worked keenly if not too skilfully. One commentator says that he could always recognise

a/

a Christian Socialist by the cut of his co-operative trousers.^{1.} Wages were paid at an average of over 30 shillings a week, £20 was spent in improvements and £150, which was nearly half the loan necessary to found the venture, was repaid. The different Associations had varied careers, but one by one, they went out of business on account of either faulty management or quarrels amongst members. The Christian spirit became lost amid petty squabbles and ~~misappropriation~~ ^{misappropriation} of funds.

In 1850 an effort was made to combine productive and distributive associations. These latter had sprung from the Rochdale pioneers who were in reality the survivors of the Owenite Movement. Neale and Lloyd Jones, a disciple of Owen but now a member of ^{Christian} ~~the~~ Socialists Central Board, instituted, on October 24, the London Co-operative Stores in connection with the Associations. A prospectus was issued giving the objects ~~as~~ as to enable members of the Associations and other persons who might desire, to obtain articles of daily use free from adulteration, of the best quality and at the lowest charge after defraying the necessary expense of management, distribution and providing for a reserve fund and that subject to these expenses, all subscribers of not less than five shillings should receive back the profits on all their purchases. In 1851 it was decided to wind up the retail stores and to open the premises as a wholesale depôt for the supply of goods in bulk to/

1. Richard Buckle^{ley} Litchfield, p. 25. (Quoted by Raven, p.198).

to Branch Stores and to such existing retail establishments as might wish to have dealings with them. By this step, the work of the Christian Socialists was extended to the sphere of consumption and distribution. Maurice and Ludlow however, never countenanced this step, holding that it was an appeal to the commercial instincts and false to the moral principles of the Movement.

The new co-operative bodies had great difficulty over their legal status and steps were taken to solve this problem. Under the Friendly Societies Acts of 1846 and 1850 a registered society existed in the eyes of the law solely for the benefit of its own members ~~and~~ ^{who} were forbidden to have dealings with anyone not a member. The Co-operative Associations could get some protection only as long as they produced what their own members consumed. The Christian Socialists influenced certain members of Parliament and one Slaney, as a result of Ludlow's coaching, moved for the appointment of a Select Committee to report upon "Investments for the Savings of the Middle and Working Classes." The Committee was appointed and evidence taken from Ludlow, Neale and John Stuart Mill, but it was not until 15th June, 1852, that a bill entitled The Industrial and Provident Societies Act of 1852 (15 and 16 Vict. C.31) was passed. Thus the whole co-operative movement received a legal status, thanks to the unceasing labour of the Christian Socialists. The Bill required a reconstruction/

reconstruction of the Association and the Store. Some of the Christian Socialists never liked the name nor the definitely Christian basis of the movement. E.V. Neale says "Christian Socialism was a name which I never liked but regarded as a mistake tending to alienate on the one hand Christians who were not Socialists and on the other hand, Socialists who did not like to call themselves Christians." 1.

The idea of Neale and the others was to make membership open to all men of a brotherly spirit and to bring them into contact with the strong Christian element within the movement. Ludlow protested against the idea that it mattered little whether a member had any or no religious belief but Maurice with his conception of Christ as the Head of every man, acknowledged or not, was unwilling to act as judge of the quality of any man's Christianity. To him any man was a Christian as long as he was "doing the work of Christ and showing the fruits of his spirit."

Finally a new Constitution was drawn up and the Society was renamed the Association of Promoting Industrial and Provident Societies. In the preamble, the principles were stated to be,

- (1) That human society is a body consisting of many members, not a collection of warring atoms.
- (2) That true workmen must be fellowworkers, not rivals.
- (3) That a principal of justice not of selfishness, must regulate exchanges.

(1) Co-operative News. (Quoted by Holyoake, Hist. of Co-op. p. 539).

At the second Annual Conference of the Co-operative movement in 1853, these clauses were adopted as the true foundation of social reform and were afterwards inserted in the constitution of the Co-operative Union. About this time Maurice had been deposed from his office as Professor at King's College, and consequently wished to withdraw from being Chairman of the Committee of Promoters. He presided at the Annual Conference of 1853 and this was his last piece of active public work in connection with co-operation. Though supporting co-operation in principle, he never favoured the Christian Socialists embarking on their schemes of distributive Co-operation. At the third Annual Conference of Co-operative Societies, at Leeds, in 1854, the Promoters who were present, decided that their work could be better done by the Executive Committee of the Conference on which were Neale, Hughes, and several other Christian Socialists. On the 25th November of that year, the Promoters met for the last time and resolved that all future meetings for business be suspended. Thus ended any direct control by the Christian Socialists on the affairs of Productive or Distributive Co-operation.

What were the causes of failure of this early Christian Socialism? In Church and State certain incidents had begun, which focussed public attention on them. The Christian Socialists always received scant support from the Church, but when the anti-popery agitation took place, Churchmen had little inclination to think/

think of improved social conditions. The Roman Catholic Church bestowed territorial titles upon its bishops and partitioned the country into dioceses. Thus the ordinary laymen saw Papal aggression everywhere. Inside the Anglican Church, he saw the Tractarians moving Romeward, and now outside was this activity of the Roman Church. The cry of no-popery was raised and this campaign distracted attention from any scheme of social improvement.

In every department of public service there was confusion, and, when the Crimean War broke out, the whole energies of the nation had to be directed to the remedying of evils. War always turns public attention away from social betterment, and in this instance the domestic problems had to be postponed. What chance had the enterprises of the Christian Socialists in such a time?

The Movement had been launched in London and repeated experiments have proved that the Capital City is the most difficult for such an enterprise. G.E.Raven says "The saddening record of petty jealousies and quarrels, of disloyalty and dishonesty which marks the history of the London Associations is in striking contrast with the stories of patient sacrifice and silent effort which brought success to the much less favoured attempts of northern co-operators." ¹,

When Neale joined the Movement he lavished his wealth upon the Associations and this was not advantageous. It attracted the/

the wrong type, men who had no other motive than the prospects of larger wages and easier conditions. One critic says that over-assistance from above and consequently lack of initiative were the primary causes of failure.

The schemes of the Christian Socialists, in London at least, made too great a demand upon the moral qualities of the first Associates. Kingsley says "Association will be the next form of industrial development. I doubt not for production, but it will require two generations of previous training both in morality and in drill to make the workmen capable of it." ¹. Thus the Movement, like Owen's attempt, failed because the followers could never rise to the ideal of their leaders. Men who had been educated in the bitter school of experience, and who had toiled amid squalid surroundings always looked for material advantage - ideals to them were only a hindrance to their rise to a competency.

Although the Central Board confined its attention to relieving conditions in London, Charles Kingsley advocated betterment in the rural districts. His novel "Yeast" was written to show the glaring injustices suffered by rural workers. To bring the population back to the country from the cities, he advocated the development of new products such as silk or flax, which could take the place of cereals, and also the encouragement of interest on the part of the labourer by some system of association. The idea/

1. Life of Kingsley, Vol.II, p.13.

idea of peasant proprietorship was repugnant to Kingsley, and he considered small holdings to be unworkable except at the cost of ceaseless drudgery. In the book, he pictures a land-lord developing his farm on the basis of profit-sharing, and having a keen interest in the housing of his labourers. This housing problem was one that interested Kingsley greatly, and to improve the interior and exterior of dwellings he instituted a Sanitary League. Typhus and other diseases were usually treated as being unavoidable, and as divine visitations, but this reformer showed that they were the result of bad drainage.¹

It is scarcely true to say that the Christian Socialists failed. Their ideal was a high one and men have again and again returned to it. Their Socialism was different to the modern conception of it, and was in reality, nothing more than the elimination of competition in production. Their social system included monarch and aristocracy, and an equal distribution of wealth was not one of their planks. Says Kingsley in a letter to Hughes, "A true democracy such as you and I would wish to see is impossible without a Church and a Queen and as I believe without a gentry."² This sums up their effort which was to improve the present social system and not to create a new one.

The Christian Socialists also recognised that even improvement in the present system required preparation. Along with their/

1. Sanitary and Social Lectures. (London 1892).
 2. Charles Kingsley, Vo.I, p. 256.

their practical efforts, they paid attention to education - not only in knowledge but also in the education of character. They recognised that they had put the practical expression of their doctrines into force too early, and that the very people whom they wished to benefit were incapable of seeing further than their material prospects.

Men in this present age are again looking back to these pioneers and are thus obtaining a glimpse of Christ's message, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

Looking at the literature of both the Owenite Movement and the Christian Socialists, it is remarkable to find how seldom one mentions the other, and yet the two movements had much in common. Both endeavoured to improve the environment of the working classes, but the Christian Socialists saw further than Owen, and recognised that religion itself was an environment. Owen's goal was a community of well-fed, comfortable and healthy people enjoying all the material blessings of life, while Maurice and his followers regarded these things as being the setting of an improved Christian character. Both regarded co-operation as a step in the direction of an improved social system - the Christian Socialists looked upon it as being the ideal, but with Owen it was really an afterthought. The two movements coalesced in the Co-operative movement, and in doing so, the Christian basis was lost sight of.

Both/

Both movements did not favour an outside authority such as Parliament imposing socialism on the state, but both looked to the change in the individual himself to bring in a perfect state of affairs.

Owen wished to take his followers out of the world and to find in communes the ideal state of bliss, while Maurice looked to his disciples to live the Christian life amid their daily surroundings. Even Kingsley with his co-operation in agriculture, regarded this as a practical experiment amid a farming people, and the harvests were to supply the world at large with food, not members only of a farming commune.

It was the outlook in both movements that was different. Owen came to his task without any definitely Christian vision - he possessed the inspiration of the spirit of Christianity in his desire to improve the lot of the unfortunate, but he never had before him the vision of the "Son of Man." With Maurice and his followers the Christian outlook was predominant, and they felt that mankind could only reach a state of earthly happiness through Christianity. To them the only social reformatory was Christianity rightly interpreted.

Both Movements had their place in laying a foundation for social reform, and even to-day men approach that reform from either the standpoint of Owen or that of the Christian Socialists. The one seeks higher wages, better conditions and housing as an end in themselves, while the latter seeks these things only as a means to an end - the Ideal Christian State.

CHAPTER VII.LATER CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST MOVEMENTS.

The first phase of Christian Socialism came to an end in 1853, after the second Annual Conference of the Co-operative Movement in Manchester. Maurice, Ludlow and Kingsley realised that the time was not ripe for the full accomplishment of their schemes and accordingly turned their attention to education. Other members of the first group threw their energy into various aspects of the labour movement, influencing it with their ideals. Again a number influenced by the theology of Maurice carried his principles into a later phase of Christian Socialism, viz. The Christian Social Union. The great ideals of the 'Prophet' of the early movement were to bring working men into touch with the Church and to inculcate a spirit of true brotherliness among all men. The progress of the first ideal was stationary for many years, but a new spirit in the co-operative and trades union movement bears testimony to the latter.

Maurice and Kingsley were the prime movers in the establishment of the Working Men's College, where men of varied views were attracted to the work of instruction.

The broad religious views of Maurice, its first President/

President made it impossible to insist on an ecclesiastical test for either instructors or pupils.

In 1877 another attempt was made to form an organisation to give expression to Christian principles in the social sphere. The Guild of St. Matthew was founded by the Reverend S.D. Headlam, a high churchman who had been a student at the University under Maurice and Kingsley, and had imbibed Christian Socialist doctrines from them. It is strange to find High Churchmen carrying on the work as neither of the two former leaders were in sympathy with that Movement. A desire on the part of later followers of the Oxford Movement to gain converts had led them into the slums, and there facing social problems they had rediscovered Maurice."¹. "Our position toward Maurice and Kingsley is that of enthusiastic disciples. We know that some of their experiments were failures, but we think that we are carrying out their principles more faithfully than those who merely go in for co-operation."². (Headlam). The principles of the Guild were (1) To get rid of the existing prejudices especially on the part of the 'secularists' against the Church, her sacraments and doctrines and to endeavour to justify God to the people. (2) To promote frequent and reverend worship in the Holy Communion, and a better observation of the teachings of the Church of England as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.

(1) Christian Socialism in England - Woodworth (1903) p.98.

(2) Socialism of Today E. Lavelaye, p.303.

(3) To promote the study of social and political questions in the light of the Incarnation.

The activities of the Guild became in reality two-fold. The age was one of scepticism. Darwinism and the Higher Criticism of the Bible were beginning to be received by the men of the street, and as a result many attacks were being made against the Christian position. In defending this, the Guild did valuable work especially against the attacks of Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant. Also the Guild took an active part in the discussion of public affairs - one of its works being the supporting of Henry George and his Single Tax Scheme, which aimed at making land bear all the taxation of the community. A protest was made against land being in the hands of a few and the practical working out of the reform was to tax the landlord out of existence.

Resolutions were passed urging upon all Churchmen the duty of (a) restoring to the people, the value which they gave to the land, (b) to bring about a better distribution of the wealth created by labour. (c) to give the whole body of the people a voice in their own Government, (d) to abolish false standards of worth and dignity.

The Guild never appealed to the popular imagination and always remained a coterie of High Churchmen whom even the great body of their own church regarded with suspicion. Despite the fact that the membership of the Guild was never more than about four/

four hundred members its able leaders were able to make its opinions felt in many spheres.

The Anglican Church has at times through its leaders made a pronouncement on the subject of Socialism. The Bishop of Manchester in his report to the Lambeth Conference of 1888, says, "The Conference defines Socialism as any scheme which aims at uniting labour and the instruments of labour whether by means of the State or of the help of the rich or of voluntary co-operation of the poor." The Bishop of Durham at Hull in 1890, says, "Socialism is the opposite of Individualism and it is by contrast with Individualism that the true character of Socialism can best be discerned. Individualism regards humanity as made up of discontented or warring atoms; Socialism regards it as an organic whole, a vital unity formed by the combination of contributory members mutually interdependent. It follows that Socialism differs from Individualism, both in method and aim. The method of Socialism is co-operation; the method of Individualism is competition." ¹.

The late Archbishop Benson in an Encyclical Letter in 1888, says, "No more important problem can well occupy the attention whether of clergy or laity than such as are connected with what is popularly called Socialism." ². After this Council of 1888 a body/

1. Rt.Rev.B.T.Westcott paper on Socialism, pp.3, 4.

2. Encyclical Letter from Lambeth, 1888 p. 10.

body of men met together and formed the Christian Social Union with the following rules:- "This Union consists of members of

the Church of England who have the following objects at heart:

(1) To claim for the Christian Law the ultimate authority to rule social practice.

(2) To study in common how to apply the moral truths and principles of Christianity to the social and economic difficulties of the present time.

(3) To present Christ in practical life as the Living Master and King, the enemy of wrong and selfishness, the power of righteousness and love.

The object then of the Social Union is the application of Christian teaching to life and first of all a careful study of the problems to be met. Its membership is limited because it is maintained that (1) Churchmen would make a body quite large enough to handle if corporate opinions were ever to be formed. (2) That it is highly undesirable that fundamental theological difference should continually be cropping up in private discussion of ways and means. "But", says Woodworth, "Far more impressive was the feeling of loyalty to and confidence in the Church A Society expressing its faith in the creed of undivided Christendom and deriving its vitality from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit assured to us through due administration of the Divine Sacraments." ^{1.}

The/

1. Woodworth, pp. 142-3.

The Union then is strictly an Anglican body and to this extent its influence was limited. However one of its protagonists states that "the Christian Social Union makes no exclusive right to the idea it promulgates. It would gladly see similar societies founded in other bodies outside the Church of England." ¹.

At first the Union confined itself to the study of social problems and discussed much of the current literature on the subject. Its next step was to prepare a ^{questionnaire} ~~questionnaire~~ to be answered by interested bodies. Such subjects as tipping, false dealing, the evils of unjust competition, the difficulty of applying the principles of Christian truth and justice to the conduct of business, misleading advertisements and the false description of goods were dealt with in this manner. Information was gathered in respect to hours and wages and circulars were issued advocating the dealing with firms who treated their employees in a humane manner.

The Union serves its purpose in adding to the work of Maurice by spreading a spirit of brotherhood. Says Bishop Gore, "The Church must carry this principle into all its transactions. It must be in the fullest sense of the word spiritually and physically a profit-sharing company." ². The Union showed the responsibility of the Christian Society for improved economic conditions/

1. Woodworth, p. 142.

2. Social Doctrine, p. 25.

conditions - a fair living wage and better housing for working men. Maurice urged the right of private property as long as the possessor realised his social responsibility. In the Economic Review, July 1846, the Union sanctions the sacredness of property under limitations. The words of the editorial are " But there is a difference between the right of property and the absolute rights of property. Christianity believes in the rights of property but disbelieves altogether in any absolute right." ¹.

Thus both the Guild of St. Matthew and the ^{Christian} X Social Union have done much to keep alight the dim flame lit by Maurice and his associates.

Later a body of Anglicans went even further than the Christian Social Union, and, adopting the tenets of State Socialism, founded in 1905, the Church Socialist League. These felt that it was not sufficient to study the social problem as impartial spectators, but that there was a place for them within the Movement itself.

The Wesleyans, Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, etc., have all their Social Service Unions. Cardinal Manning intervened in the Dockers' Strike of 1888 and since that time the Roman Catholic denomination has interested itself in social betterment.

In/

1. Social Doctrine, p.395.

In 1910 a Conference comprising members sent from the social unions of various religious denominations sent delegates to the Interdenominational Conference of Social Service Unions. The European War prevented combined activity for a decade, but social conditions which were the aftermath of the Treaty of Versailles, and the demobilisation of huge armies, again made necessary a discussion of the Christian attitude to the position. Accordingly a conference of the various Social Unions was held at Birmingham in April, 1924, under the title of the Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship - commonly abbreviated to Copec. This Conference discussed all the phases of the Christian relation to life but the reports on Industry and Property and the Historical Illustrations of the Social Effects of Christianity are the ones which concern this present study.

The Commission members responsible for the reports included Anglican clergy, Labour members of Parliament, Representatives of Employers, Lecturers in Economics and Representatives of the Trades' Union Congress. The spirit of Maurice and his early associates runs through the report and one of the conclusions echoes Maurice in saying "God is our Father and therefore the true relation of men and women is that of brothers and sisters." 1.

1. C.O.P.E.C. Report No. IX, p. 17.

The general conclusions of the conference are (1) Co-operation, helpfulness and mutual consideration, not self-seeking competition, give the key-note of human well-being.

(2) Jesus seriously meant this as a practical result to be achieved upon earth.

(3) All social institutions and industrial organisations must be tested by spiritual standards.

(4) The sanctity of human life and personality, demands recognition, by the positive provision for its physical, moral, aesthetic and spiritual development.

(5) This social conduct, being in harmony with the nature of God, is therefore in harmony with the true return of things and will, if wisely directed and consistently pursued, produce all that is necessary for life in its fulness. ¹.

Though the attitude of the Conference was that of a body of Christians discussing problems from a Christian point of view, it seems to have discovered that all social wrong-doing emanates from employers, proprietors and industrialists. One of the representatives of the Catholic Social Guild, in dissenting from the report, says, "The blame of our present difficulties does not lie wholly with employers, proprietors and industrialists."² The Commission seems to commence with the assumption that all these are/

1. Report No. IX. pp. 17 - 18.

2. " " " p. 199.

are anti-Christian, but surely some of them may regard their property etc., as a trust for the community and not wholly for their own gain. It has not emphasised sufficiently the spirit of gross-materialism that is often found among employees, a fact which Maurice found difficulty with in his first experiments. The conclusion amounts to - that given improved conditions and a healthy environment, the world is well on its way to a social millenium. Owen taught the same thing one hundred years ago, and the Conference emphasises his outlook. It overlooks the fact that the great mass of the socially enslaved is not in contact with organised Christianity, and it is doubtful if these were housed in palaces and given handsome bank balances, whether they would come any nearer to the Christian Ideal. Christianity is something more than material prosperity, and side by side with social betterment must come the raising of the ideals of the masses. The report of the Commission deals with the raising of the ideals of the "Classes" and this is very necessary but it is not the only difficulty in the present position. Good work was done in showing the Classes what the Christian Ideal is, but the generalisations on unemployment, honesty in business, wealth, property and self-development, are sign-posts on the highway of life to those whom it seeks to address. (Vide Report, IX, p. 194).

The general preface says, "We should be the last to claim any large or general measure of success - Our reports will not be in any sense a final solution of the problems with which they/

they are concerned." ¹.

The work done despite its tendency to one-sidedness, is a noble endeavour to state the Christian ideal and to awaken Christian men and women to their duty to the community.

The recommendations of the Conference are being discussed by Christian bodies throughout the world. In every large centre in Britain there is a sub-committee formed to discuss the reports, and this will in time bring a rather academic finding into touch with reality. Out of these discussions will arise some practical steps to bridge the gap between masses and classes and to bring to the former a higher ideal of life and eventually to lead them more into touch with the Christian Church.

CHAPTER VIII.MODERN SOCIALISM.

The Modern Socialist Movement in Britain had its beginning with Robert Owen, whose followers, according to Kirkup were the first to be termed Socialists. As previous chapters endeavour to point out, the originator was ~~a~~theist in theory, but he attracted to himself followers who were atheists, with the result that the Movement down to the present day has had a remarkable rationalistic tendency. The influence of Marx with his materialistic interpretation of history, has still further forged the chains of rationalism on Modern Socialism. Founded on a religious ideal of brotherhood, the movement has grown, and, to all appearances, is still a growing factor in world politics. Various attempts have been made to give a definitely Christian bias to it and the Christian Socialists, the Guild of St. Matthew, the Christian Social Union and others have all added their quota to the endeavour.

Socialism captured the imagination and the support of the working class and to-day the Trade unions strive for a socialised state. While the Unionist gives allegiance to his ideal of the brotherhood of man, he believes that he can gain the ideal better within his own movement than within the organised Churches/

Churches. At the present time there is a huge gap between the Socialist Movement and the Christian Church. At the beginning, the reformers received little encouragement from the Church whose bitter opposition and conservatism drove Owen to his famous diatribe against the religions of the world. Goaded to desperation, he made his denunciation although at heart never an atheist. Thus Socialism of the nineteenth century was born amid irreligion and has grown to manhood still with that tendency. The various efforts of the Church have made but slight impressions and these have been partially nullified by the progress of Marxism. Amongst the Socialists themselves there has always been a minority which reconciles its socialism with its Christianity and dreams of a Socialist state owing direct allegiance to the founder of Christianity.

The two great theories which hold sway to-day in the Community are Individualism and Socialism and the first has been modified to include Trusts or collections of individuals pursuing the aim which formerly a single individual sought after. The laissez-faire theory of the early nineteenth century which is still held by many to-day, shows the length to which individualism may go - a policy of non-intervention in all spheres of life. Liberty is the catchword and what crimes are often committed in its name? Carlyle speaking of his own time says, "Liberty, I am told, is divine. Liberty when it becomes liberty to die by starvation/

starvation is not so divine." 1. or again "Laissez-faire - supply and demand - one begins to be weary of all this. Leave all to Egoism, to ravenous greed of money, of pleasure, of applause - it is the Gospel of Despair." 2.

In the doctrine of complete individualism, one is supposed to rise over one's weaker brethren by ability and initiative and to carve out a name and fortune without any outside interference. The prize is to the strong, the superman, and the race to the swift, while the weak, the unfortunate, become mere tools in the hands of this demi-god in his flight to fame. The extreme individualist believes that the state is a collection of warring atoms and that victory goes to the one using talents to the best advantage. The state is more than an aggregate of individuals - though each may bring a contribution to the whole, the whole itself has a definite characteristic apart from the characteristics of its component parts. (Vide Maciver's "Community") 3.

In a modern democratic state an extreme individualism is an impossible position to defend. What becomes of the wealth and property which the individual amasses without the strength of the State to guarantee his rights to it? In a State where every/

1. Past and Present, p.212.

2. " " " p.184.

3. Maciver * p. 86 et.seq.

every individual held the property without any sanction of the community, he would enjoy it only as long as ~~as~~ one stronger and more able than himself did not exist. The millionaire can only remain a millionaire whilst the laws of the State recognise his right to his millions.

In a modern state the laws are theoretically the "vox populi". True, the legislature is divided into parties, each striving to advance its own interests and majorities pay little heed to minorities. There is still enough civic conscience, however, to prevent any majority doing violent harm to a minority, and each majority knows that some day it may itself become a minority. In some advanced democracies, as for instance all the States of Australia, there is a system of preferential voting which precludes any one party legislating without taking into consideration other parties. On the whole, laws are made by legislators who in turn are elected on a democratic franchise and the citizens of a State are thus indirectly responsible for the laws by which they are governed. Laws are made to protect life and property and the Community guarantees to each of its individuals the enjoyment of life and goods. The individual can only have possession as long as the State decrees that it is for the good of the people as a whole. A modern State may go further and decree that for the good of the State a man must be ready to place his life in jeopardy, e.g. the conscription laws during the late war/

war. The liberty of the individual is curtailed in accordance of what the State thinks is best for the people as a whole. Those who advocate an unrestricted individualism lose sight of social obligations.

As opposed to Individualism, the theory of socialism is advanced, but here again the exponents lose sight of the fact that the whole, while it has its own characteristics is necessarily shaped by the characteristics of its component parts. The contribution of the separate parts in the whole must not be lost sight of. A theory of socialism must take notice of elements of individualism because the individual often uses the cloak of socialism to advance his own ends.

When a definition of Socialism is examined one is almost overwhelmed by the variety of the definitions given. To Owen, Socialism was really communism - the living in compounds and losing individuality in the corporate whole. The Christian Socialists looked upon the practical socialism as nothing more or less than co-operation. Schäffle says "Critically, dogmatically and practically, the cardinal thesis stands out, collective instead of private ownership of all instruments of production, (land, factories, machines, tools), organisations of labour by society instead of distracting competition of private capitalists. Consequently there would no longer exist the present division of private/

private income into profits and wages but all income would equally represent a share in the national produce allotted directly by the Community in proportion to the work done." 1.

John Stuart Mills definition is "Socialism is any system which requires that the land and the instruments of production should be the property not of individuals but of the community or association or of the Government." 2.

Kirkup says "Socialism is a theory of social evolution based upon a new principle of economic organisation, according to which industry should be carried on by co-operative workers jointly controlling the means of production." 3. The Right Honourable Ramsay Macdonald writes "No better definition of socialism can be given in general terms than that it aims at the organisation of the material economic forces of society and their control by the human forces." 4. The Fabian Society has as its basis the following, "The Society aims at the reorganisation of society by the emancipation of Land and Industrial Capital from individual and class ownership and the vesting of them in the community for the general benefit."

Mr. William Graham, late under secretary of the Treasury in the Macdonald Ministry, advocates the expression of socialism through/

1. Quintessence of Socialism, p.p. 7-9.

2. Political Economy, p. 125.

3. Enquiry into Socialism, p. 125.

4. Socialism Critical and Constructive, (1924) p. 41.

through the taking over of public utilities by municipal corporations. The ordinary citizen regards Socialism as the pooling of all resources or capital and giving each individual an equal share. Some Mound and Hyde Park Orators inform amazed listeners that all men are equal and that Professor and Crossing-sweeper are worth only the same remuneration. The modern revolutionary talks glibly of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat as being true socialism. So diverse are the views of socialists that a clear definition is difficult to obtain but the general idea behind all the obscurity is that Land and the means of production, the public utilities at least should be held in trust for the community and for the use of the community.

Karl Marx, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Cole (the advocate of Guild Socialism), M. Trotsky, Mr. Cook, and Sidney Webb are all men who glory in the name of Socialist, but M. Trotsky would deny that some of the others mentioned were Socialists and vice versa. All however, agree in condemning the present organisation of society as being what they call capitalistic.

It is necessary, at this juncture, to examine the ideal of a capitalist. He believes that his ultimate social aim is the highest good of the Community but while recognising this he goes on to announce that the interests of the community rather than of individuals and classes can only be secured by organising Society into/

into the interests of individuals and classes. As a result the whole of society becomes permeated by the principle of competition and self-interest. It is this principle that the idealists of the socialist cause wish to see banished. Says one writer, "Probably nine out of every ten socialists are genuine believers in socialism; they see the evils of the capitalist system and honestly desire to banish them and it. Yet anyone with experience of the labour and socialist movements both national and international will admit that their greatest weakness lies in the fact that they are unconsciously permeated by the beliefs and desires of capitalism. If, for instance, the principles of social service really ousted the ideal of profit-making, and competition among individuals and classes professing socialism, labour would only have to blow with its trumpets and the walls of capitalism would fall down as flat as those of Jericho. That it does not happen is due to the fact not only that the individuals who compose labour and socialist movements are forced to struggle for existence in a world of capitalism, but from their earliest years their minds are necessarily and unconsciously saturated with the individualistic competition and profit-making capitalist conceptions and ideals." ¹. There is much truth in this and it is difficult to change the outlook and the habits of mankind in one generation, and far more difficult to change a state of society by one legislative act.

Socialists/

1. Socialism and Co-operation by Leonard Woolf, p. 15.

Socialists are divided into two main classes: the evolutionary and the revolutionary - the former looking to the gradual bringing in of the social millenium by education and the permeation of ideas while the latter see the only alternative to the present in seizing the power of government by violent action. In neither Owenism nor Early Christian Socialism was there any suggestion of direct action - no appeal was even made to parliamentary legislation. Both movements were launched in the hope that the experiment would be so successful that the whole community would soon be found within the movements. One who looks for a sudden change from the phsychology of capitalism is expecting too much and fails to take warning from the past failure in this task.

The Fabians look for the spread of Socialistic opinions and the social and political changes consequent thereon. The basis of the Society says, "The Society seeks to promote these by the general dissemination of knowledge as to the relations between the individual and society in its economic, ethical and political aspects." ¹. These may rely wholly on education for the bringing in on their principles.

The Right Honourable Ramsay Macdonald, writing of the bringing in of the Social State, says, "There is a section of the Socialist Movement which has grown beyond the crowd psychology, which is sceptical in belief, which has placed reason as a guard to/

1. Basis of the Fabian Society.

to challenge everything seeking to pass into creeds which reflect upon problems, which is for ever constructing new things out of old and perfect things out of imperfect. Its danger is that it may be too rational. It forgets habit and tradition, it forgets its historical inheritance, it forgets that the material upon which change and reason have to work is that of the society into which men were born, it forgets that no generation can build save on the foundations left for it, or modify save upon the structure which it inherited. This is the section that wishes us to believe that life can be changed by revolution and that idealism is something absolute. But it is the part of practical reason not to seek the absolute nor a vacuum. In its dreaming it never forgets life. Into all wise forecasting and anticipating, the experience of the past enters as largely as the reason of the future. In the walls of every City of God which the practical reason builds are the stones of the cities of men from which it would flee. It is troubled by contradictions in thought and action, in precept and conduct, in obvious improvements and in stubborn faults and it labours to reconcile and transform." ¹. These words fairly represent the evolutionary school and as Mr. Macdonald is an ex-Prime Minister and present leader of the British Socialists in Parliament, it is safe to say that this is the trend of the purely British aspect of socialism.

This/

1. Socialism Critical and Constructive, pp. 2 & 3.

This leader is essentially an idealist and is a prophet of his cause. He breaks the bond of materialism hammered fast upon the majority of his followers. Speaking of a true Socialist, he says, "The pledges he gives do not concern his achievements of the morrow so much as the purposes which underlie and impregnate all his continuing action. He has ideals and they guide him and he rejects everything of the nature of violent breaks and brand-new systems." And again "Socialism calls men to give unstinted service in return for a reasonable reward measured in terms of life and no one should be more impatient with the fallacy that a man cannot be expected to give the service before he gets the reward." Breathing the spirit of Owen and the Christian Socialists, Mr. Macdonald says "It is only when the worker by brain or by hand does his best for society that he will create in society that sympathy and support without which the Labour Movement will never attain its goal." ¹.

The Modern British Socialist goes beyond the earlier phases of State Socialism which was the direct control of industry by the political organ working through a bureaucratic Civil Service; and beyond the co-operative view of the early socialists. Mr. Macdonald gives as his theory, "We must begin to organise the Political State from the smallest civic unity which men form, that is the village or town or urban and rural district. The/

1. pp. VI, VII.

The municipal bodies which administer local affairs cannot appeal to the imagination by reason of their limited powers. They should be allowed to develop a policy of their own and to shoulder their own responsibilities." 1.

The modern idea is to give community responsibility to municipal bodies - then to extend the outlook to the county~~s~~ by giving it power over water, electricity land experiments, public health, secondary and college education. At present in Scotland at least, most of these are socially controlled by City Corporations. The horizon is next extended to the nation. Thus we have state control through local government in the municipalities and counties and with the state or nation as the final director. This is the plan of one school of British Socialists but those who claim that name to-day are sharply divided between the idea and that which has its roots in the teachings of Karl Marx whose name is exalted by many in this land and whose influence finds its height more in Continental Countries. He is the inspiration of the modern Revolutionary School of Socialism which advocates the seizing of the reins of Government and by duress and violence compelling all to accept the doctrine of socialism.

Marx was a Hegelian and dealt with universal processes interpreting the present by the past. No Utopias or communities on/

1. p. 234.

on the principles of Owen, St.Simon or Fourier ever tolerated by this power of the "Direct Action School". His fundamental principle is the theory of surplus value, a doctrine which teaches that the capitalist appropriates to himself what is left after the labourer has been paid wages necessary to the subsistence of himself and family. His theory is based on the belief that labour is the creator of all value (a dictum of Owen, the Chartists, Locke, Adam Smith and Ricardo). Under Capitalism, labour is not paid by the value which it creates but by the price of labour power as a commodity on the market. Thus Capital possesses itself of the surplus product and so the rich become more and more able to exploit and labour becomes less and less able to defend itself against exploitation. The Capitalistic appropriators of the product of labour contend for the possession of the market, each filling it as dictated in his own interest. Full use is made of machinery and the market becomes flooded beyond the need of the Community. Thus with an overstocked market, goods will not sell - a commercial crisis is established and panic, misery and starvation ensue. Crisis after crisis occurs until panic and disorder are universal and the productive forces rise in chronic rebellion - the final revolutionary act comes and the new regime is established. In Marxian phraseology the capitalistic appropriators are called bourgeoisie and the socialist workers are termed the proletariat.

In the Communistic Manifesto of 1847 it is stated that
the/

the Communists would abolish bourgeois forms of property but when the collective product known as capital has been socialised, purely individual property will remain. As all history is the record of class expropriation, the Communistic Movement "involves the most radical rupture with traditional ideas." Political power must be used "to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State". This is to be done gradually and each country must use its own method. A programme is outlined which includes the abolition of property in land, a graduated income - tax, abolition of all rights of inheritance, a national bank, a national transport system, equal liability of all to labour, co-ordination of manufacture and agriculture, and free education. Such are the contents of the Manifesto who adds the suggestive appeal, "Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries unite." Marx suggests that in some countries like America, Britain, and as far as he knew, Holland, the proletariat might attain their goal by peaceful means, but generally speaking, force must be the lever of revolution and to force they must appeal when the time came.

The modern disciples of Marx accept the prophecy that the revolution is essential and point to the new regime in Russia as a proof of its efficacy. The difficulty at present is to/

to get any authentic information as to the state of that country because its friends picture it as the Promised Land while its opponents describe it as the Abode of the Damned. Local advocates of Bolshevism who profess to follow Russia's example in all things, wish not only to do away with rulers, but the family and religion also, holding that these are merely props to hold up a tottering capitalistic system. Bolshevist Russia has small elected committees managing each industry and these committees in turn are responsible to a central or governing body. This supreme committee controls the army and the police and is able to enforce its will upon the populace, stamping out with a ruthless foot, any spark of rebellion.

In Europe to-day democracy has been superceded by an oppressive oligarchy in Russia and an oppressive dictatorship in Italy, Spain and Greece.

In Great Britain there is a Communist party, affiliated with the Soviets of Russia, which endeavours to "whiteant" the labour movement and to gain control of it. This party is not strong numerically, but its clamorous partisans use such threats as ~~to~~ often^{to} send shivers down the spine of the average citizen. In Hyde Park and other public fora one hears ribbald blasphemy poured forth from the mouths of demagogues, and the so-called wage slaves are encouraged to develop a class consciousness and to prepare for the revolution which is to usher in the industrial millenium/

millenium baptised with the blood of capitalists and all upholders of the old order. The Communist, however, is often a sincere unholder of Marx's doctrine and seeing no hope for toiling humanity in the existing order, looks to the revolution to bring a change believing that the end justifies the means.

The endeavour to improve Society has been the basis of all movements for reform. Of course there have been charlatans and self-seekers in all movements, but the sincere reformer, whether Owenite, Christian Socialist, Evolutionary Socialist, Bolshevic or Communist - all had and have an improved society as their ideal - the difference of method being the dividing line between them.

CHAPTER IX.THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL.

Looking at the composition of modern Society it is found that firstly there is a landed aristocracy and a small group of individuals having great possessions. Then comes a middle class including professional men and skilled artisans, and lastly the great mass of the working class who have little or no possessions and who eke out an existence on meagre wages. The first class have house, land, servants and luxury, the middle class often have a struggle to live, but possessing a class consciousness, bravely face the task of keeping themselves respectable and of training their children to take their place in life. Despite local-government supervision, the third class often live in badly ventilated hovels, with a family of children all occupying one room. Wages are on a bare subsistence level, and when unemployment comes, the State is forced to help with insurance schemes. Women and girls are still employed by large firms who pay the minimum of wages for the maximum of work. As Kingsley in Alton Locke depicted girls selling their bodies to add to a pittance of a wage, so there is the same temptation to-day to girls living away from home with board to pay and clothes to purchase.

Sir/

Sir Leo Chrozza Money shows that in 1913 only 1,200,000 persons out of a population of 46,000,000 received over £160 per annum. The Board of Inland Revenue states that during the war the wealth added by individuals to their private fortunes was £4,180,000,000 of which two thirds went to 340,000. ^{1.}

In business the day of competition is over. Huge combines whose tentacles often stretch out over many countries, fix the prices of goods and woe betide any retailer who sells below the fixed price. The object of this is not to cause increased wages to workmen, but to give increased profits to shareholders some of whom are already wealthy. The American Trade Commission report for 1917 shows that profit absorbed three-fifths and labour one ninth of the price per article in the shoe trade. So it is not the poorer people nor the workmen who profit by combines and fixed prices. On a smaller scale, shop-keepers meet together and fix the prices of articles and a shop underselling finds that its supplies from the wholesale house are cut off. The Ministry of Reconstruction in 1919 appointed a committee which reported as follows:- We find that there is at the present time in every important branch of industry in the United Kingdom an increasing tendency to the formation of Trades Associations and Combinations, having for their purpose the restriction of competition and the control of prices." ^{2.}

There/

1. Quoted from Socialism by J.R.Macdonald, p. 169.
2. Report of Committee on Trusts, (1919), p. 2.

There are also large combinations of Trades Unions which fight against combinations of employers for supremacy, wages and working conditions being the bone of contention. The whole develops into a struggle for material advantage. Among employers the principle is to get as much as possible out of the workman, while the latter decides to do as little as possible for his wages. The kindly feeling between both classes is lost and each regards the other as a sworn enemy. The age has become one of rank materialism - one class thinking in terms of profits and the other in terms of wages and idealism goes to the wall. In this struggle religion is often looked upon as something that handicaps a man in his pursuit of his lawful prey and the voice of the Church receives scant attention.

The outlook is dark but not hopeless, many employers are earnest Churchmen, having regard to their workmen and also many workmen still have the ideals of Jesus in their hearts. The only solution to the problem is a true Christianity and the emphasising of the principles of Jesus in all the relations of life.

A study of the scriptural teaching on social reform shows the Old Testament ideals and also the teachings of the Gospels. The Old Testament idea appears to have been a theocracy with the ruler and the priesthood as ^{Yarweh's} ~~Yarweh's~~ ^{vicegerents} ~~vicegerents~~ on earth/.

According to Hebrew theory, the whole land was the gift of ^{Yarweh}~~Yarwek~~ and was divided among the tribes so as to give a share to each family or clan. In the law of the year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25) provision was made that the land should not be alienated from its original proprietors. Purchase of land was reduced to the granting of a lease of fifty years at the longest. A perusal of the messages of the various prophets shows that this was often departed from and many are the denunciations against greedy land grabbers and the arrogant rich oppressors of the poor. The cry was against unequal distribution of wealth, so it is apparent that the right to absolute private ownership became an accepted fact.

In New Testament times mention is made in the gospels of the householder who went to his vineyard to hire labourers (Matt. XX. 1.), of the farmer who possessed sheep (Matt. XII, 22.), of the young man who had great possessions (Matt. XIX, 22), of the householder who planted a vineyard and sent his servants to receive the harvest, (Matt. XXI, 34), of the Parable of the Talents, (Matt. XXV, 15). Thus private property was accepted as an established fact, Jesus himself making no attempt to condemn it. What he did do was to lay down broad principles to guide the possessors of such. His message as far as property and social matters may be summed up in his words, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you." Mankind is apt to seek "these things" first and to hope that the Kingdom/

Kingdom will be added. Jesus taught that a man's life "consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth." His hearers were directed from the worship of the material to the seeking after the Kingdom of God which Jesus in another place said was within them. It was the inward change bringing about a change on everyday things. Jesus exhorted His followers to seek to become righteous and all other things would follow. Thus in the Gospels there is no detailed direction for the solving of the social problem.

In the history of the early Christian Church there is no evidence despite the incident recorded in Acts that communism was general. Even Beer says "It may be fairly be doubted whether communistic institutions really existed amongst the primitive Christian communities as one might infer from Acts IV, 32., but there cannot be any doubt that common possessions were looked upon by many of the first Christians as an ideal to be aimed at." ¹. The early Christian community consisted of a small body of believers hemmed in by fanatical enemies of their own race or by indolent pagans, their Roman masters. They were the "Ishmaels" of their land and every man's hand was turned against them. There was thus developed a community spirit, and, since Jesus had proclaimed the Fatherhood of God, the early believers assumed the corollary, the Brotherhood of men. Also expecting the early return of Christ and the establishment of His Kingdom on earth they felt that private/

1. History of British Socialism, p. 6.

private property was not of much value and that it would be expedient to pool resources. It is doubtful whether the common possessions were looked upon as an ideal to be aimed at or whether the set of circumstances in which the early believers found themselves dictated the Action of Acts IV, 32.

The Pauline epistles deal with social problems in principles not in details, Masters, Servants, even slaves are accepted positions - each being enjoined to carry out his duty" doing service to the Lord and not to men." ¹.

Thus it is idle to look to the scriptures for anything beyond principles. As the Christian conscience becomes educated, men are able to apply these principles more and more. Slavery was condoned by St. Paul, but the Christian conscience has declared it to be against the ideals of the Son of Man.

As long as men seek their own profit the conditions of Society will not improve. An affluence of wealth does not guarantee noble living and freedom from poverty may conduce to a higher life but do not ensure it. Many of the present-day Socialists support the contention that material possessions and ample leisure are the summum bonum but the possession of these is no guarantee that the social ideal will be attained. It is not true that environment is the only factor in the lives of individuals forming the community but there are few of the very poor who rise superior to/

1. Ephesians 6, 7-9.

to their surroundings. Moral health is not found among the idle rich or among the very poor but among the fairly well housed middle class. The social reformer therefore is faced with the housing problem and the unequal distribution of wealth, but he is also faced with an outlook which never sees beyond these material things. Jesus taught the ideal of brotherhood and this entails service not only to ones own class but also to the whole community. The true reformer must get his followers to advance beyond a material outlook and to grasp the idea that brotherhood involves even the sacrifice of ones self and possessions. The Socialists and even Communists and so-called Reds call each other "Comrade" and hold up the idea of brotherhood, and all approximate here to at least one element of Christianity.

Professor James Seth commenting on this connection between Socialism and Christianity, says, "Christianity means socialism in one sense - it means socialism in the sense that our conduct is to be characterised by the ideal of socialism. That is to say, we should substitute the spirit of social service for the spirit of personal gain - the spirit of co-operation for the spirit of competition - the spirit of co-operation for the spirit of competition, the spirit of love for the spirit of hostility to a neighbour. What it amounts to in my judgment is the identity of Christianity with what I might call ethical socialism - its identity/

identity with socialism as a principle and ideal but not necessarily as a method." ¹. The call is to deny oneself for the sake of the community even to the losing of a life to gain a soul.

The late Doctor J. Wilson Harper in his Chalmers' Trust Lectures (1910), says, "The social ideal is a state of society where its agencies - liberty, equality and brotherhood harmoniously co-operate towards a common end. It implies the enactment of just laws and their impartial administration. The fear of being thrust back by the efforts of others to thrust themselves forward will be unknown in such a state of society. With it a superabundance of wealth in the hands of a few will be neither possible nor desirable but the maximum of opportunity for doing good will be given to all its members while the inducement to each to seek his neighbours well-being and thereby find his own, will be positive and strong." ². To attain to the ideal of this definition a change from the existant state of society is necessary. In times of crisis, as for example the Great War, the spirit of brotherhood comes to the surface but in the more leisurely times of peace each man has more time to think of his own, and self interest becomes an all absorbing theme. Thus those with opportunity and the unscrupulous do thrust down the more unfortunate and gather to themselves an abundance of wealth/

1. Quoted from Pamphlet by Rev. R.J. Drummond, D.D. (Committee of Social Questions of U.F. Church of Scotland, 'p. 17.)

2. p. 127.

wealth. Dr. Harper's definition emphasises the opportunity for doing good and for seeking a neighbour's well-being. This is definitely Christian and pointing to something higher than the gathering of individual wealth and is the ideal for Christian men and women in any community. The Christian duty is to give expression to one's individuality in the service of one's fellows.

This will be held to be too Utopian for the practical affairs of life and looking on life as the majority look on it to-day, this is quite true. Civilized man at present spends six-sevenths of his life in the curious occupation of trying to buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market and his motives become narrowed down to seeking a two shilling rise in wage or making a profit of twenty-five per cent. To set an ideal far beyond this is the work of Christianity in its social aspect and as progression towards an ideal is a slow process. Christian men and women need not look to revolution to bring about a change.

The great difficulty in contemplating a method to reform Society is to synthesise the liberty of the individual with the common good of the community. Despite all the schemes of socialism, the individual's own peculiar personality refuses to be submerged. Owen with his communes failed not only because he had no great unifying principle but because he regarded his communists as so many cogs in a wheel. The individual possesses a personality which/

which however much it may be devoted to the service of others yet it is impossible to merge it in theirs. On the other hand personality can only reach its highest development through membership in a society and one is bound to give to the common service whatever he has of special capacity. Thus Maurice and his colleagues saw that there were two sides to social reform. Not only were they to set before men a goal of brotherhood, but they must train men to acquire the qualities essential to a life of membership in the community. G.E. Raven says "Christian Socialism was an attempt to supply alike a social policy constructed with due regard for the individual and corporate needs and a motive force to accomplish its fulfilment." ¹.

The Church to-day is awakened to the social problem and sees that its duty is to supply this motive force. Too long has it left social welfare to outsiders and has contented itself with theological discussions or else it has been lulled into slumber with the comfortable doctrine of "Leave well alone." Not only has the Church of England issued its Bishop's Reports but other Churches, including the Churches in Scotland, have discussed the problem. During the War conferences were held on Industrial Reconstruction and such problems as housing, employment, etc., were dealt with. At a Conference held in Edinburgh on the 12th March, 1917, representatives of the Church of Scotland, United Free/

1. Christian Socialism, p. 368.

Free Church of Scotland, Scottish Episcopal Church, Original Secession, Free Presbyterian Church, The Reformed Presbyterians, The Wesleyans, Baptists and Congregationalists and the following findings were agreed upon:- (a) "A permanent improvement in the relation between employer and employed must be founded on something other than a cash basis.

(b) Workpeople should be taken much more largely into the confidence of employers than hitherto."

The Conference also urged that social problems be solved on Christian lines according to the teaching and under the guidance of Jesus Christ for whom the Church claims supremacy in every phase of national life.¹.

The Church to-day can be more than favourably compared with the Church of Owen's time, for that reformer had more of the Christian spirit, though he himself would have denied it, than the forces of organised religion.

He followed the pillar of fire while the Church being in a somnambulistic trance failed even to get a glimpse of it and bitterly opposed him for seeing what it was blind to. As a result the early stages of social reform were associated with unbelief and the Church to-day is battling against tremendous odds to overcome the mistakes of its protagonists of a hundred years ago.

The Christian Socialists had as their ideal co-operation and/

1. Report of Schemes of the Church of Scotland, (1917), p. 624.

and laid more emphasis on the Christian aspect than the Socialistic. Flint says of them, "Those who first bore the name of Christian Socialists in England, were Christians of a type as healthy, beautiful and noble as God's grace working on English natures has produced."¹. These men felt that Christianity alone could overcome the evils of the industrial system of their day, and, believing this they entered courageously into battle with the forces of evil, seeking to imbue the entire world with the spirit of Jesus, bringing under its sway, trade and commerce, and all the affairs of everyday life. Looking at the hugh Co-operation Societies it is seen that co-operation is looked upon as a means of bringing material benefits in reduced prices and increased dividends and that the ideals of Maurice have been lost sight of in the scamper for gain. The socialism of the early Christian Socialists was not organisation for profits but for improved conditions of working and for the greater recognition of the personality of the workmen.

As Owen was opposed by the Church, so were Maurice and his band and so too a great number of Churchmen oppose any interference of the Church in socialist activities. The claim is that the Church is concerned only with religion and not with theories of social reconstruction. But the Church is concerned also with the teachings of Jesus and the putting into practice of His principles.

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1. Socialism, p.434.

In so far as any condition exists which is contrary to the spirit of its Master it is the Church's duty to point out that this is wrong and also to teach what is the true Christian attitude. It is the duty to condemn any state of society which is based on worldly possession whether it be capitalism or socialism and if either of these stands for materialism alone then it is the Church's duty to point to higher virtues and to show that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth.

The Church as a whole has a great part to play, for if Society continues to disintegrate and decay, Christianity will be carried down with it. It is impossible in modern times for the Church to hedge itself round with a wall and to interest itself only with what is inside. Rauschenbush says, "There are only two possibilities. The Church must either condemn the world and seek to change it or tolerate the world and conform to it." ¹. The former has never been tried wholeheartedly while to accept the latter possibility means death.

Facing the Social problem to-day, it is of no avail to dream of a return of a past golden age because population has increased and civilization has changed, and conditions in the world are different from anything of old time. Much as one may cry against combinations in industry and trading, these, though they have slain the small concerns with their simple doctrine of competition/

1. Christianity and the Social Crisis, p. 342.

competition, have certainly the virtue of encouraging efficiency, but their fault lies in that they give benefits to the few instead of the many.

The withdrawing from the world and founding Christian Communes has in the past had little effect in influencing the community at large. America is the modern home of these experiments but little success has crowned the efforts. The Early Christian Socialists, taking warning from the failures of Owen, instead of withdrawing from the world, went down to the world with their message.

Again there is always a danger in the Church attempting to control and monopolise the Social Movement, with its own organisations. A safer plan is, if it truly desires to save the social life of the people, to content itself with inspiring the Movement with religious faith and daring. While it is necessary to do this and to educate men to a state worthy of the Christian ideal, it is not for the Church to wait idly till that time is reached. As faith without work is dead so is a Church that has no constructive policy. As the State has been forced in the past to intervene and to compel improved social conditions so the Church can quicken the Christian conscience in the Community to compel its parliamentary representatives to act for better housing, better conditions of employment, a better distribution of land and wealth by introducing co-operative methods in agriculture and industry/

industry. If Christian men and women wish to ally themselves with a system of Socialism, they can show a bureaucracy the futility of aspiring to power alone and can seek to inspire it to faithfully serve the Community. For in a socialised State there must always be bureaucracies and one inspired by the highest ideals of service is the only one worthy of confidence.

Social progress is a slow process, and the ideal cannot be brought about by one stroke of revolution. Men are impatient with the slowness of the progress and wish to see immediate changes but reformers of the past have laboured for advancement and have passed to their rest, seeing little progress. Owen the agnostic without any definite Christian Creed and the Christian Socialists with their definite confession of belief in the Kingdom of God, subscribed their quota and passed on having laboured in the cause of righteousness. Much remains to be done; neither education nor labour for improved conditions can separately achieve the goal, but a Christian ideal which inspires men to labour and to learn is in the long run going far to bring in the reign of righteousness. Improved environment there must be and true religion there must be. The ideal of Maurice and his followers though it failed because results were expected too quickly is still a worthy one. A Movement that teaches the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God, making practical experiments gradually, and at the same time educating man to prepare for greater things goes far to undo "man's/

"man's inhumanity to man" .

What then is the difference between the Christian ideal and that of Robert Owen ? One seeks to satisfy man's whole nature while the other laid emphasis on the material side. Both teach brotherhood, but in Owen's doctrine the stress laid on material prosperity caused his followers to miss his true teaching. Materialism kills love because the latter contains elements of the spiritual. The Christian message is "Seek first the Kingdom of God and these things will be added" . It places the emphasis on spiritual value. Man is faced with the material in all phases of Life. He must live, he must have his daily bread, his labour, his home, his recreation, but often these things become so great a part of his life that they "crib, cabin and confine" him. He becomes a prisoner to them and does not see the sunshine outside. It is the spiritual that sweetens life and frees man from its chains. Owen's assumption was that if man be placed in the best environment he will love his brother but the lesson of his settlements was just the opposite. The inmates could never rise to the highest. Instead of brotherhood there were jealousies and self-seeking and the quarrels caused by these wrecked the efforts.

The Owenite ideal was really to change man from being a cog in one wheel to the cog in another, from being a cog in the wheel of the manufacturers mills to being a cog in the communist/

communist wheel. The Christian ideal calls man to exert his individuality, to use his talents and power. The strict Individualist says "Use these for yourself, carve out your own fortune" but Christ taught a life of giving, even giving one's individuality in service. Where was any call to exercise one's talents in Owen's scheme? All were brought to the one level - all were expected to subscribe the same amount to the whole and to receive the same reward. The result was that the diligent workman was placed on an equal with the slothful and soon learnt to do just enough labour as he thought his recompense merited.

Owen himself sacrificed his all for his fellows. He was the outstanding figure of his time in teaching men that they were their brothers' keepers. His own individual life would put to shame many who did profess Christianity. Could he have gathered together a community of like individuals to himself, his schemes might have succeeded for a while but sooner or later the individuality of each would have exerted itself and the end would have been failure.

The final success of co-operation to which Owen gave grudging support, cannot be said to be the result of his teaching. The Christian Socialists were more enthusiastic on its behalf than he was, but Maurice and Kingsley retired from it when they saw which way it was tending. Its success to-day is more a trading one than the application of any spirit of idealism. Modern co-operation does not necessarily mean brotherhood.

On an earlier page is shown the difficulty of giving a definition of Socialism and it is equally difficult to give one of Christian Socialism. The definition cannot be narrowed down too much and to give a broad basis it seems sufficient to define Christian Socialism as Christian Brotherliness. Owen sought after brotherliness but the above definition includes an adjective which he would not have accepted. His was a brotherhood to save the body - true Christian Socialism is a brotherhood to save the soul. True brotherhood requires more than a common interest - it requires the blending of spirit with spirit. The members of one family will stand together not so much because they are pursuing the same end but because there is a bond of affection between them. Without this, even the fact that they are of one blood does not hold them together. So a Socialism to endure requires love as its foundation, the following of the scriptural injunction to love neighbour as self. It is Christianity alone that can bring men to reform society on the basis of love.

In a state thus constituted, public utilities would be run not by companies for profit, but by corporations for the benefit of the public, while agriculture and industry would be on co-operative lines. In all these there would be room for the individual to express his enthusiasm and individuality, but the place-hunter and the self-seeker would find that there was not place for them.

A true Socialism is one which is not merely a different form of government but one which leads each citizen to see that he gains true freedom, only through service to his fellows.

The present age is heir of the past in which a few men saw the guiding star on the horizon and attempted to follow it. They may have eventually become lost in the desert but they did cut tracks through unexplored wastes. The jungle is still unconquered but progress is being made and when the fertile plains beyond are reached, men of that day will sing paeans to Robert Owen and the Christian Socialists acknowledging them as prophets of Social progress who saw the Promised Land afar off.

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